UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF MRS. SARAH SCOTT NOVELIST (1723-1795)

WALTER MARION CRITTENDEN

A THESIS

IN ENGLISH

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PHILADELPHIA
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PREFACE

The female voice in English fiction became increasingly important in the eighteenth century, particularly after 1750, but in certain instances it is difficult to find specific information regarding individual authors. It is true that on the part played by women, especially in developing the new form of story telling, there are several general works, as, for instance, Myra Reynolds' *Learned Lady,* and Clara Whitmore's *Woman's Work in English Fiction,* though few specific facts touching individuals are given. Then, too, there are a few exceptions to this complaint as in the case of Fannie Burney, and an interesting manuscript study of Sarah Fielding written by Madame René Huchon-Lecocq of Versailles, France, (1910), which was very kindly loaned to me by the author. But, this lack of information has led to the present study of the materials of the life of Mrs. Sarah Scott (1723-1795), together with a survey of her nine books, of which six are novels.

The preparation of this study has entailed a period of research in the British Museum, at London, and journeys to Cambridge, Hythe, and Catton (near Norwich), places which are closely associated with the less known portions of the lady's life. During the time spent in London, I was in correspondence with the Rev. Reginald Blunt, who compiled a two volume edition of the letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, Mrs. Scott's famous sister, Queen of the Bluestockings, from whom I learned that the manuscript collection of the Montagu correspondence and papers, filling a number of large cases, contained letters written by Mrs. Scott, and also, that the collection had been sold to "the Rosenbach Galleries of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U. S. A." The letters were traced through the Philadelphia firm to the Huntington Library of San Marino, California, where they are now permanently housed.

A study of Mrs. Scott's letters, which are a part of the Montagu collection, written between the years 1737 and 1755, has been possible through the assistance of Miss Mary Potter, Research Worker of

the Huntington Library, who made careful transcripts of the correspondence for me. This work with the manuscript letters has thrown considerable new light on the life of Mrs. Scott, which, in turn, leads to a fuller appreciation of both her personality and writing. Permission was graciously granted by Dr. Max Farrand, of the Manuscript Department of the Huntington Library, to quote from the letters. Dr. Farrand also suggests that the complete letters are to be published in the not far distant future, an event which will be looked forward to with keen interest by all lovers of eighteenth century life and customs.

These letters constitute the most interesting discovery in the course of my investigation, but the search for the author's works has been delightful, though difficult at times, especially in the case of *The Test of Filial Duty*. With the exception of this last named work and the first edition of *The History of Mecklenburgh,* the British Museum possesses all of Mrs. Scott's works, including the condensed form of *The History of Sir George Ellison.* My search through the other libraries of London, Oxford, Cambridge, and many here in the United States failed to locate a copy of the first edition of *The History of Mecklenburgh,* but a copy of *The Test of Filial Duty* was found in a private library in Philadelphia.

Finally, for the actual selection of a subject in this early field of fiction, I am indebted to Professor John Cooper Mendenhall, of the Department of English of the University of Pennsylvania, whose untiring guidance and assistance have been the chief inspiration in this work. And in this same sense, my sincere thanks go to the various members of the Department of English of the University of Pennsylvania, in whose classes I have received suggestions and training, and also to the library of the same University for assistance in the securing of useful materials.

WALTER MARION CRITTENDEN.

Philadelphia, May, 1931.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF SARAH SCOTT—NOVELIST (1723-1795)

CHAPTER I

GROWTH OF BIOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE

Life moves too rapidly to allow time for the names of most men and women to be remembered, and as a matter of fact, the great majority do nothing worthy of continued memory. That time should have allowed the name of Mrs. Sarah Robinson Scott to fade almost utterly from view, however, is somewhat surprising, in view of the fact that she was the author of nine literary works, and what was, at one time, a voluminous correspondence. It is true that she was a lover of a quiet life, partially as a result, no doubt, of an unhappy marriage, and of health that was never good. Moreover, her lack of desire for honor or praise is seen in her continued failure to acknowledge openly the authorship of her works, though the truth must have been known to her friends.[1] The time, indeed, had not arrived when a woman could feel free to acknowledge openly work in such fields, and in this, as in other respects, Mrs. Scott was truly a representative of her day. Yet an examination of her novels, and a comparison of them with her life as it has been possible to reconstruct it in the following pages, will prove, it is thought, not without interest for the light thereby thrown upon the manners and customs of a century which in turn casts an illuminatory reflection upon our own.

One of Mrs. Scott's last requests seems to have been that all

[1] Horace Walpole owned a copy of the second edition of *Millenium Hall* which is now in the British Museum, on the fly leaf of which is a notation regarding its authorship; and in a letter of May, 1772, he wrote a letter to the Rev. William Mason telling of Mrs. Scott's *Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné*. If Walpole knew of the works and their author, surely her closer friends did likewise.

her papers and voluminous correspondence be destroyed.[2] It is not difficult to believe that a vast amount of exceedingly interesting material was lost through this request. Fortunately, scattered bits of information escaped the hands of those who attempted to carry out the lady's wishes, with the result that there has been a gradual recovery of facts which make it possible to get a fairly definite idea of the individual. The following pages present the materials which have been assembled in the past, and together with new material gathered in the course of the present study, complete a picture of Mrs. Scott as novelist, historian, letter writer, and practical charity worker.

At the time of Mrs. Scott's death in November, 1795, there appeared only the briefest notice in the column "Obituaries of Remarkable Persons" of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[3] It reads, "At Catton, near Norwich, Mrs. Scott, widow of George Lewis Scott, S. esq., and a sister of Lord Rokeby." In 1798, the same magazine published a short account of the life of Mrs. Scott.[4] "Mrs. Scott (Widow of the late George Lewis Scott, an ingenious man and excellent mathematician, well-known in the world), was the younger sister of the present Lord Rokeby. She died at Catton in Norfolk, in November, 1795, and deserves a better memorial than she has hitherto received. She was author of a variety of ingenious publications; among which 'Millenium Hall,' a novel, and the 'Life of D'Aubigné' will be recognized by persons much conversant with modern literature. Among many excellent qualities, her benevolence and charity were such as have very rarely been equalled, scarcely ever exceeded. Her mental powers were strong, her memory capacious, and her knowledge extensive, particularly in history." After an examination of the facts as known today, this passage stands out as being particularly comprehensive.

Eight years later, that is, in 1805, that great old scholar, Sir Egerton Brydges, whose *Censura Literaria* is such a treasure house to the seeker of what is unusual and out of the way in literary history, published[5] the following account of Mrs. Scott's life, together with a list of the books which were attributed to her hand. Mr.

[2] See *Censura Literaria* reference quoted below, p. 9.
[3] *Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1795, ii, 1056.
[4] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1798, ii, 827.
[5] *Censura Literaria*, I, 293-305.

Brydges was admirably qualified for this work. He had married Mrs. Scott's niece, the daughter of the Rev. William Robinson. She was, he says, the "wife of George Lewis Scott, Esq., and sister to the late Mrs. Montagu of Portman Square and of Matthew Lord Rokeby.

"Mrs. Scott died at Catton, near Norwich, in November 1795. The following is an imperfect list of her numerous publications: all of which were, I think, anonymous, and many of them not now to be traced. She was an excellent historian, of great acquirements, extraordinary memory, and strong sense; and constantly employed in literary labours; yet careless of fame, and free from vanity and ostentation. Owing to a disagreement of tempers she soon separated from her husband, who was a man well known in the world, of amiable character, and of intellectual eminence, especially in the severer sciences; but in every other relation of life, she was with some peculiarities, a woman of exemplary conduct, of sound principles, enlivened by the warmest sense of religion, and of a charity so unbounded, so totally regardless of herself, as to be almost excessive and indiscriminate. Her talents were not as brilliant, nor her genius as predominant, as those of her sister, Mrs. Montagu; but in some departments of literature she was by no means her inferior. When she left her husband, she united her income with that of her intimate friend, Lady Bab Montagu, the sister of Lord Halifax; and they continued together till the death of the latter. From that period, Mrs. Scott continually changed her habitation; for restlessness was one of her foibles. Her intercourse with the world was various and extensive; and there were few literary people of her day with whom she had not either an acquaintance or a correspondence. Yet when she died, not one of her contemporaries who knew her literary habits came forward to preserve the slightest memorial of her; and she went to her grave as unnoticed as the most obscure of those, who have done nothing worthy of remembrance. Under these circumstances, the writer of this article trusts to a candid reception of this imperfect memoir, while he laments that Mrs. Scott herself shut out some of the best materials, by ordering all her papers and voluminous correspondence, which came into the hands of her executrix, to be burnt: an order much to be lamented, because there is reason to believe, from the fragments which remain in other hands,

that her letters abounded with literary anecdotes, and acute observations of character and life. Her style was easy, unaffected, and perspicuous; her remarks sound, and her sagacity striking. Though her fancy was not sufficiently powerful to give the highest attention to a novel, she excelled in ethical remarks, and the annals of the actual scenes of human nature. In dramatic effect, in high wrought passion, and splendid imagery, perhaps she is deficient.

"The list of published works follows:

1. The History of Cornelia. A Novel.
   London, Printed for A. Millar. 1750. duod.
2. A Journey through every stage of Life.
   London, for A Millar. 1754. 2 vols. duod.
3. Agreeable Ugliness; or, the Triumph of the Graces.
   Exemplified in the real life and fortunes of a young lady of some distinction.
   London, for R. & J. Dodsley. 1754. duod.
4. The History of Mecklenburgh.
   London, for J. Newbery. 2 vols.
5. A Description of Millenium Hall.
   The second edition corrected.
   London, for J. Newbery. 1764. duod.
6. The History of Sir George Ellison, in 2 vols.
   London, for A Millar, 1766. duod.
7. The Test of Filial Duty, in 2 vols.
   London, for the Author. Sold by T. Carnan, No. 65 St. Paul's Churchyard. 1772. duod.
8. Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné."

Later, in volume II of the *Censura Literaria,* Brydges added to this "imperfect list" of her publications, *The History of Gustavus Ericson.*[6]

Fragmentary as it is, the account of Mrs. Scott as given by Brydges, remained the chief source of knowledge about her for many years. In 1816, Chalmer's *Biographical Dictionary* published an article on the life of George Lewis Scott[7] to which was added, word

[6] *Censura Literaria,* II, 177, Article XXI.
[7] *Biographical Dictionary,* vol. 27.

for word, the Brydges account of Mrs. Scott. Robert Watt, in his *Bibliotheca Britannica,* 1824, gives the list of Mrs. Scott's literary production, but adds nothing to the story save that he places *The History of Gustavus Ericson* in its proper chronological order. Another note on Mrs. Scott is to be found in the *Critical Dictionary of English Literature*[8] but the article refers one to the Chalmer's *Biographical Dictionary,* from which source Allibone almost certainly took his material. This means that Brydges supplied the facts used.

It is true, of course, that in 1809, Matthew Montagu made some note of Sarah Robinson (Scott), incidental to his edition of Mrs. Montagu's letters,[9] but the additions chiefly helped to clarify and substantiate Mr. Brydges. These letters show that the Robinson girls were well educated, and the suggestion is that much of their learning was gained at Cambridge, during visits with Dr. and Mrs. Conyers Middleton, and from association with their brothers. Mr. Montagu says, "Their emulation (the Robinson boys), produced a corresponding zeal in their sisters, and a diligence of application unusual in females of that time. Their domestic circle was accustomed to struggle for the mastery of wit, or in superiority of argument, and their mother, whose frame of mind partook rather of the gentle sedateness of good sense than the eccentricities of genius, was denominated by them, 'The Speaker,' from the frequent mediation by which she moderated their eagerness for victory."[10] This spirit of learning was certainly carried over to reading done by Sarah. Her sister wrote a letter in 1740 which begins, "I must take you away from the agreeable company of your grey-bearded heroes long enough to tell you that I am much obliged to you for your last letter, and desire another as soon as possible. A living beau is better than a dead hero."[11] And, in a letter of the next year, the following is noted: "I admire your classical life: what a variety does study make."[12]

Mr. Montagu reveals a fright from smallpox in 1739 and then tells of Sarah's falling ill with the disease early in 1741. This per-

[8] Allibone, *Critical Dictionary of English Literature,* 1870.

[9] Montagu, Matthew, *The Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu,* 1809-13, 4 vols.

[10] Ibid. I, 6-7.

[11] Ibid. I, 124.

[12] Ibid. I, 300.

sonal glimpse is a definite addition to Brydges. Mr. Montagu quotes a delightful letter written by Elizabeth Robinson to the Duchess of Portland, May 7, 1741,[13] recounting her joy at visiting her now convalescent sister, though they had to meet in the open and talk to each other at "about four foot distance." "Miss Sally" would not allow her face to be seen because of the effects of the disease. This letter leaves an impression that she was to carry the scars of the smallpox the rest of her days. It is curious to note that the young lady had made such a careful count of the spots on her fact that she could give the exact number, "one hundred and forty."

In 1873, in the course of a survey of the writings of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu,[14] Doran came upon certain letters, and uncovered various details which have added to our knowledge of Sarah Robinson Scott. He called attention to the fact that the two sisters were as much alike as two "Peas," and that the younger was called the "Pea" in familiar circles in the days previous to the elder's marriage. More interesting, perhaps, are those additions which prove the development of an interest in politics from about 1760 on. Mrs. Scott apparently kept a close watch on the movements of Mr. Pitt and other State dignitaries. She knew the policies of the parties and kept her brother and his wife posted on affairs during their days in Italy. A typical sentence is, "Lord Bute is high in favour; the city is pleased with him; the Tories are much attached to him. . . ."[15] Doran quotes at length from letters of Mrs. Scott which touch upon the marriage of George III to the Princess of Mecklenburgh in 1761.[16] One very personal letter quoted in this volume gives a glimpse of Mrs. Scott getting too old for personal fears of beauty.

An article by Edward M. Borrajo, published in *Notes and Queries,* August 10, 1889, adds one item of definite information. " 'Millenium Hall' was written by Mrs. Sarah Scott, sister of the famous 'blue-stocking' Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu. The first edition, of which your correspondent transcribes the title, was published in

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[13] Ibid. I, 177.
[14] Doran, *A Lady of Last Century,* 1873.
[15] Ibid. p. 92.
[16] Ibid. pp. 94-98.

1762."[17] Brydges and subsequent writers made reference only to the second edition, 1764.

W. P. Courtney made the next study of the facts of the life of Mrs. Sarah Scott in his article for the *Dictionary of National Biography,* 1897.[18] To the information gained by earlier studies, Mr. Courtney added data touching upon the marriage. "About 1751," the article says, "she married George Lewis Scott (q.v.) and on 30 April 1752 Mrs. Delaney writes on the 'foolish choice' which Mrs. Scott has made for herself adding that her husband was 'a very bad man'." Thus, the approximate dates of the unfortunate marriage are given, and later study has failed to locate more definite information in this respect. This article also gives the date of Lady Bab's death as 1765. In respect to the literary works, Mr. Courtney adds another title, *The Man of Real Sensibility,* which is, however, only a short form of the story of the life of Sir George Ellison.

The chief contributions to the knowledge of Mrs. Scott, made in the two plump volumes of Miss Emily Climenson's study of Mrs. Montagu through her letters,[19] are such as touch upon the personal nature of the lady. First, the date of birth is given—September 21, 1723. Prior to this, not even the year of birth seems to have been known. Second, a letter of October, 1738, is quoted, which tells of a ball attended by the two Robinson girls and two of their brothers. Thus, Sarah was allowed to mingle in society at the age of fifteen. Third, in the same general narrative, Miss Climenson shows that Sarah accompanied her sister Elizabeth on the latter's wedding trip.[20]

Brydges and others record the marriage of Sarah Robinson to George Lewis Scott, but Miss Climenson is the first to show anything of the development of the friendship of the two young people.[21] Even here, however, the information is given only in its relation to Mrs. Montagu. Mr. Scott is first seen in 1745. In 1748 it seems that he caused a misunderstanding between the two sisters, and that his love for Sarah had become serious, which Mrs. Montagu did

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[17] *Notes and Queries,* 7th Ser. viii, 116. August 10, 1889.
[18] *Dictionary of National Biography,* edited by Leslie Stephen, vol. 17.
[19] *Elizabeth Montagu, the Queen of the Blue Stockings,* 1906.
[20] Climenson, I, 116-17.
[21] Ibid. I, 206-08, 211-12, 280.

not like. Miss Climenson says that Mr. and Mrs. Scott first lived at Leicester Fields following their marriage, and later moved to Chelsea, but adds nothing to the known facts regarding the married life, except that Sarah was removed from her husband by her father and brothers.

From Miss Climenson it is learned for the first time that Mrs. Scott and Lady Bab moved to Bath Easton in the summer of 1754. The charitable work, around which the story of *Millenium Hall* is centered, kept the two ladies busy each summer up to 1765. A letter of October 16, 1755, written by Mrs. Montagu to Dr. West tells of the occupation at Bath Easton.[22] The earlier accounts of Mrs. Scott mentioned the interest in charity, but this is the first actual picture of the work.

The Climenson collection of letters stopped at 1761, but the work was carried on by the Rev. Reginald Blunt, in a two volume compilation and arrangement of letters, under the title, *Mrs. Montagu, "Queen of the Blues."*[23] It would seem that with the years, the two sisters gradually drifted apart. Certainly Mr. Blunt does not find as much contact between them as was true before 1762. Mrs. Montagu, of course, was keenly interested in the "Bas Bleu" gatherings, in which Mrs. Scott seems to have taken no special delight. There was no misunderstanding. Each one went her own way, but amicable relations were maintained.[24] One very interesting note in Blunt tells of "some further monetary provision for her sister," made by Mrs. Montagu.[25] The information regarding Mrs. Scott's income is very meager, but since it is certain that Mrs. Montagu was a wealthy woman it is easy to believe that there was "monetary assistance" for her sister.

From the Doran volume it is learned that Mrs. Scott had gone to Catton at least as early as 1787. Mr. Blunt quotes an earlier letter, but the year is the same.[26] Whether this can be taken as the year of the removal to Catton is not sure, though from this time on it is pretty clear that she made her more or less permanent home

[22] Ibid. II, 78-79.
[23] Blunt Reginald, *Mrs. Montagu, "Queen of the Blues,"* (n.d.).
[24] Ibid. 118, 167, 175.
[25] Ibid. I, 302.
[26] Ibid. II, 210, 254.

there. Even today, Catton is one of the quietest and most charming of the English hamlets. In view of Mrs. Scott's love for such places, it is no wonder she chose Catton as the last abode. There is, unfortunately, no record to be found at Catton to establish the exact place of her residence, but this adds one additional point of confirmation to our impression of the retiring nature of the lady.

Further Light on Biography

By a correlation of the materials touching upon the life of Mrs. Scott from Brydges to Blunt, four more or less distinct divisions present themselves. Her girlhood, 1723 to 1742, was spent chiefly at Mount Morris, the family seat in Kent. This was the period of general education. The next eleven years, 1743 to 1754, were spent in active participation in society and travels. It was during this period that important friendships were made and life currents definitely determined. From 1754 to 1765, Mrs. Scott and Lady Barbara Montagu lived the life of "Millenium Hall." An ideal of charitable work was put into actual practice, and it would seem, was successful. The fourth division covers that period of years, 1766 to 1795, during which Mrs. Scott seemingly withdrew from formal activities and watched the movement of life from a distance.

In the development of this study, additional information, concerning the various divisions of Mrs. Scott's life, has been drawn from a series of manuscript letters, which, as stated in the preface, are now in the possession of the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. In the following pages it is to be understood that any letter to which reference is made and which is not otherwise assigned belongs to this collection. It is to be hoped that the letters will eventually be published in order that the world may have the use of them. They make it possible, as nothing else has been found to do, to enter with some intimacy into the life of their author, share in her interests, follow her moods, trace, to a degree, her mental development—in short, to realize her personality.

Girlhood

The earliest of the letters which has come to light is addressed to "Dear Sister," and bears the date, February 20, 1737-38. For the

work of a young girl, fourteen or fifteen years of age, it is a rather remarkable letter. There is a running spirit of gossip in the first part. Then, there is a newsy handling of personal (family) affairs in and around Mount Morris, with particular emphasis on her father's plans to go to London, where she is to join him, and where her sister, Elizabeth, is also to go after her visit with the Duchess of Portland. It is the sort of letter which would do justice to a person of several years more experience in life. With such an early fluency in the use of language, and ease in expression of thought, one can hardly be surprised at the later literary efforts.

A second early letter, dated 1739-40, gives Sarah's reaction to a gay social season which Elizabeth was having in London. She apologizes for writing because of the possibility of waking the social belle from dreams of conquests, but adds that the letter will probably create sleep for the reader. She looked upon her elder sister as a "beautious woman," but there is certainly no sense of jealousy or envy. Rather, she seems to be definitely proud of her accomplished sister.

In the course of the letter of 1739-40, the following passage is characteristic of both the letter and the writer. "I remember it was proposed at Bath that Sisters shou'd divide the compliments that were made them, therefore, I shall expect my share, and to see very soon, half a quire of paper full of encomiums fly down to me, wafted by the breath of praise; as you have more than you have occasion for, you may bestow some of them upon me, tho' I don't pretend to make you any return. . . ." The young lady explains that her friends are the animals of the fields, but that even they are not intimate, for they run away at her approach. Somewhat contrary to the above bid for praises, and probably more nearly true of the real woman, another letter says, "for my part, I like a little love and a great deal of peace better than so much kindness; I wou'd have all things produce their general effects and not act toward me in an uncommon manner. I shou'd never endure to be scolded out of fondness or kiss'd out of hate, let them rather be the consequence of anger, and of love, as they have always hitherto been thought, and not change their natural course for me."

Young Womanhood—Social Progress—Friendships and Marriage

Prior to the marriage of Elizabeth Robinson to Mr. Montagu (August 5, 1742),[27] Sarah Robinson's letters are full of chatty and newsy accounts of people and things. After the wedding, the letters which are at hand take on a new trait. It would seem that before 1742 their writer had had no particular interest in participating in actual events. Of course, she took part in dances and other such diversions from time to time, but without any keen sense of delight. As an observer, however, she made nice distinctions of types of persons, as for example, between a beau and a man. The beau was to be despised in a measure, while it would seem that an imaginary hero type was always kept before her mind's eye. This distinction had been defined in a letter of 1740, as follows: "It is a pity a hoarseness shou'd ever be so ill employed as on a sensible man when there are so many beaux in the kingdom who wou'd be improv'd by it, how many wou'd it make charming and how many women almost agreeable; one might give it to a thousand of one's acquaintances and not have one tolerable sentence lost by it." In 1742 came the wedding trip, upon which the younger sister was the companion of the bride, in good eighteenth century fashion.[28] This event and a trip to Bath in 1743 in search of better health seem to have made of the Maine girl of Mount Morris, a woman of certain charm. From this point on, the letters still retain a chatty quality, but there is more of Sarah personally in them, and less of Elizabeth. That is, in the early letters, the sister was the chief object of discussion. Sarah Robinson seems to have loved her sister with an uncommon love, which had a tendency to submerge her own personality in the charms of the other. Such a letter as the following, dated October 14, 1741, reveals the particularly strong bond of sisterly love which existed. "The love of writing you see, enters into me as soon as you go out of the house; while you are with me I have all I desire, content is then my companion; but when you are gone I can't help writing in hopes you will send me some return for the affection and spirits that are gone with you, all of me that is portable you carry with you, it is no wonder

[27] Climenson, I, 117.

[28] See: Climenson, I, 129, 135. Sarah stayed with her sister at Allenthorpe, after the wedding, until near the end of the year.

therefore if I am in haste to send a letter after two such good friends."

The love for Mrs. Montagu extended to Mr. Montagu, in a sense, after 1742, and also to the young son born to this family in 1743, though Miss Robinson was not particularly fond of children as a rule, if a letter of October, 1743, can be taken seriously. "Mrs. Wadman," says the letter, "has a charming girl about a month older than my Nephew, and put me in mind of him and in good humour with children of that age, for when I saw Mrs. Freind's child so extreme plain I began to doubt whether all children were not so, that one had not some partiality for, but Mrs. Wadman's makes me find that they are pretty creatures if one bears no relation to them and I found myself vastly fond of her, but I believe it was rather the remembrance of my Nephew than her own merit." A little later, after adding to each letter, "my compts" to "the boy," she appended to one, "and I desire you treat him like a Pope and kiss his toe for me." At the time of the first birthday of the child, the Aunt wrote, "I want to hear my nephew speak an oration. We drank his health yesterday in great solemnity to his birthday which I hope he will see many more of than any of us shall be present to." And then, one letter connects the love of the infant to that of his mother. "I find a most Aunt like affection for him, and a great desire to see him, but still, it is as a child. . . yet, I believe I love him more for the sake of his mother than his own." Mr. Montagu and his sister-in-law were ever good friends. He was solicitous of her health in his letters to his wife, and she, on her part, in concluding her letters to Mrs. Montagu always added some word for the husband—"my compts (or love) to Mr. Montagu."[29]

When Elizabeth Robinson centered her love upon Mr. Montagu, her sister's excessive regard was turned partially upon herself, while at the same time a degree of popularity at Bath, along with maturing feminine graces, made of the young lady a real personality. She now goes to London herself and partakes of society there instead of getting mere news of it from Mrs. Montagu. On May 9, 1743, she writes to the latter from London, "Miss Burroughs can't go to the Play to-morrow, nor nobody but Miss Anstey and I that I can meet with.

[29] There was no relation between Mr. Montagu and the Lady Barbara Montagu with whom Mrs. Scott lived for a number of years. Lady Bab was a sister to George Montagu Dunk, Earl of Halifax.

I believe I shall send to her to go to Ranlagh tonight. I shall dine in Charles Street."

During the summer of 1743, Sarah Robinson's health gradually failed and in the middle of September she set out for Bath to drink the waters. It is probable that her assistance at Mrs. Montagu's innoculation against smallpox caused the low state of health. Judging by the volume of letters written from Bath, though, and their general tone, it would seem that health was regained almost at once. The writings are full of the spirit of the place. There are fine pictures of the Beaux. "There is none here of the men that cou'd make one rougir for any other reason than sorrow that they are no better, tho' they improve a little." And, "if I shou'd get many lovers my reputation will not be in danger, for most of my acquaintances are old enough to preserve it: I am very well acquainted with the cleverest men here, as for most of the young ones, they are so silly I am told I can't help showing I think them so. . . ." While none of the young men pleased her particularly, several of their names are prominent enough in her letters to be noted. Mr. Pitt was one of the few with whom she cared to dance, but she did not know him well enough to expect a request from him for the honor. There were even a few dull evenings in the assembly—"For all, I have been two nights together in the list of dancers, no one took pity enough on me to ask me, I bore it patiently." But the case was not hopeless. "Mr. Berkeley is come down which I am very glad of, for either the joy or ridiculousness of his face almost makes me merry, I never saw any man look as happy as he does, he seems ever in high joy." Mr. Vanburgh was another of the popular young men of the place, though it is carefully explained that "our affections to him are quite Platonic," because he was supposedly in love with one of the Misses Nash. This man was a good dancer and probably deserved the compliment paid him by the observant young lady: "he is the only man here I like to dance with so it was prudent to make it agreeable to him."

One young man is mentioned a sufficient number of times in the letters to deserve special attention. He is Mr. Amiens. The first mention of the name is in a letter of October or November, 1743. "I drank tea yesterday at the rooms according to the Sunday's custom, and was extream agreeably entertained by having one of my

favorites next to me." The letter tells of the young man's unusual looks, smallpox marks, freckles, coloring, and then is climaxed with, "his mother was frightened with Punch in his Puppet Show when she was with child of him and therefore it was no wonder he shou'd be shaped exactly in the Punchinello stile." But the picture is softened a bit with the addition, "to make one overlook all these wonders, a vast abundance of wit with the drollest imagination that ever man had. . . ." This account of Mr. Amiens is full of a racy quality, and at the same time there is an air of the imaginative which seems to have made Mrs. Montagu doubt the reality of such a personage. Mrs. Montagu's doubts are mirrored in one of her sister's letters, beginning, "I assure you our invention is put to no trouble about inventing names for there is a very compleat set without our lending them any assistance as you will find if I send you a small journal of our time for these few days . . . these names are as real as any names are, therefore, sure you need not suspect us of any additions, and as for Mr. Amiens, I am not only convinced of the reality of his name but likewise of his person, for he has made a great impression on my mind, in short, I believe I shou'd be desperately in love with him if he did not make every thing appear so jocose that I can't think even of him seriously." This doubt on the part of Mrs. Montagu adds a delightful sense of the comic to the traits of Sarah Robinson. Her words were evidently not always taken seriously by her sister. Of course, the young lady was just twenty years of age at the time, and her outlook on life was as bright as that of any of the young ladies of the day. Another amusing account of this same sort is found in a letter of October, 1743. "I am going to drink tea with Mr. Godfrey as do all the people here almost, the best thing Batchelors can do it seems is to give tea and bow." This tolerant contempt for bachelors in a girl of twenty is quite delightful. She had an eye, none the less, for young men who measured up to her rather strict ideals of looks. "You wou'd not fear my catching cold with walking home if you had seen how well I was taken care of the last time that I practiced that thriftiness. I can't say his care was so vigilent as to keep me warm if the night had not been light enough with the help of the lamps to see his face which is handsome enough to make me forget it cou'd be cold. He met me going out and wou'd

not for the world trust me to go home alone so very obsequiously escorted me to the door." This exceptionally high praise makes one suspect sarcasm but the letter does not disclose such an attitude.

Humorous turns which could be directed at herself seem to have given Miss Robinson a keen delight. While at Bath she took a cold which affected her voice. In writing of the condition, she says, "My cough is now chiefly turned to hoarseness, I am fit for no conversation but scandal, for my voice will not rise above a whisper." And in another letter, her appetite is characterized in an interesting fashion. "As for my stomach, it is a very good economist still in general."

In the description of general scenes, events of the day, etc., the letters show as much vigor as those of the best of the eighteenth century epistolary artists. Note the spirit of activity at Bath in the following: "Having done the duty of the morning, drank the waters, walk'd, play'd at Shuttlecock and made a visit, I think I may allow my bones to rest and finish my time by writing to you." This was a busy morning, as all mornings probably were, but the afternoon and evening still had to be filled. The same letter tells of a Ball that was given in the evening which she attended in company with Mr. Sloper. Above all, though, a definite sense of enjoyment is found in the letters from Bath. The young lady was pleased with the life she found there.

The Bath visit was ended before Christmas of 1743. The festive season was spent with Mrs. Montagu, but from very early in 1744, Sarah was at home with her parents for almost a year. Reading, letter writing, walking, paying visits to the neighbors, were some of the occupations which filled her time. A visit with one family is fully described to Mrs. Montagu. "We went on Saturday to visit Mr. Godshall and his wife. They are comical people. They have legs & thick ones too, which they don't use, for they scarce so much as walk down stairs; hands that they do nothing with, eyes that serve only to look at the wainscot, noses regaled with nothing but shut up rooms, ears continually fill'd with each others nonsense & tongues employ'd only to vent their own. So much for their way of using the gifts of nature. They make those of fortune turn to no better account. They have a large income which they don't spend,

a pretty place they never look at, woods they don't walk in & cascades they never listen to. I never knew a family that wrap'd their talents up in napkins as these do. One wou'd imagine them covetous even of their senses for they seem most industriously to avoid the pleasures they might afford them. They treat their money and themselves alike, they shut up each safe from use and from mortal eyes. Nature seeing to how little purpose it was to dispense any of her precious gifts into that family, play'd the Miser to a thing they call a Daughter as much as they themselves cou'd have done had they directed her composition, her outward form is a most slovenly piece of workmanship & had she been produced Minerva-like out of her Parents brain she cou'd not have been a sillier animal, nor with more meanness in her heart had it been formed in theirs. She is to be learned & is taught Geometry, tho' Squires are frighted at the word & the women think she is learning witchcraft which her figure seems to warrant." One can well wonder why such pictures as this did not find a place in the novels. From another letter it is learned that Sarah took a certain interest in fancy work. "I have painted an anemony which I brood over with the affection of a Parent, an ugly rose which nothing but maternal love can make me endure the sight of and I am in labour of a tulip which now I can't be deliver'd of till Monday."[30]

In 1746, Mrs. Robinson died.[31] The Mount Morris house was handed over to the oldest son, Matthew; the father moved up to London and his unmarried daughter was thrown to a great extent upon her own. Later in the same year she was at Tunbridge Wells with her father, but he left her there alone. She writes, "I hope I shall behave myself prettily when I am my own chaperone." The eighteenth century had hard and fast ideals regarding young women and their proper conduct. One can hardly imagine, however, that Sarah Robinson could be otherwise than circumspect. During the coming years, visits were made to Hitcham, Badminton, Bath Easton, Canterbury, while such people as the Bests, the Freinds, and the Montagus helped keep her time fully occupied.

[30] This letter is undated save the year, 1744, but it was probably written on Sunday, on which day the young lady's religious training would allow no work, and thus the final words, "I can't be deliver'd of till Monday."

[31] Climenson, I, 227.

The Robinson girls were fortunate in having such indulgent parents. Though the family lived in Kent from 1727 to 1746, the two daughters were never required to stay at home year in and year out. At only one time is there found the slightest objection from the father and mother to their younger daughter's travels. In 1744, the business affairs of Mr. Montagu made a trip to the north of England necessary. Mrs. Montagu decided to accompany her husband and asked her sister to be in the party. The family at Mount Morris, who had seen very little of "Miss Sally" for a couple of years, felt that she should stay at home. But, the trip was made despite the objections. One letter shows something of the spirit of the family feelings on this occasion. "Our folks are out of sorts very much about my going, and I don't know how I shall be able to fix on the time, they wou'd defer it so long."

The parental indulgence, of course, had to go over to finances for the daughters to travel about as they did. Several letters have been found which speak of Sarah's share in the family purse. A note of 1742, written by her to her sister, says, "we were in full expectation of a letter from you to my father to ask for money, but loe none came, but Mamma, strangely thinking you were more likely forgetfull than rich (I can't imagine how she cou'd take a thing into her head which she had had so little reason for), had asked my father what she shou'd send you, having determined the matter by herself, and his answer agreeing with her determination, consequently they have sent you by William, 10 or 12 guineas." This shows a delightfully free hand, and the same is true with the second daughter, for in a letter of 1751, she writes to her father thanking him for his letter and a bill, adding to this, "surely no one was ever so comfortably paid their allowance, or any income as I am, that receive it before hand whilst other people are complaining that from whatever it is produced, it never comes to their hands till long after it is due." She was not an extravagant young lady. The following portion of a letter reveals an economical side, and indeed, one could perhaps imagine her as a business woman in a small way. "I intend to write to my father and send him my bill next post, I am sure he will have reason to like it for it will be lower than my expenses by a good deal."

A group of letters written from Bath in 1748-49 are the next

to show a further development in personality. The young lady is now twenty-five years of age, which for the eighteenth century is beyond the days of frivolity. The general tone of the letters is more settled, though the writer still retained a varied interest in many phases of life. The letters of 1743 were filled with pictures of the beaux and dances. Now the scene is enlarged. The accounts of the rooms, the teas, the assemblies, the walks, even the riots led by groups of young ruffians, are quite vivid. "We were at a musick breakfast yesterday," says one letter, "the first there has been, I believe there was not less than a hundred people there, which made the room so hot and crowded that in pitty to myself and others I am determined to have no share in increasing the crowd again, finding no other entertainment from it than being sick, tired, and hot; in the evening we play'd at Pope Joan and Lady Kilmorney, Lady Dorrance, Miss St. Leger, her cousin an ugly sort of a Beauty, Lord Robert Car, Mr. O'Hara & a Mr. Pit, my chief favorite at this place, an extream ugly man but well behaved and seems sensible but I don't know him at all." There are also some highly amusing bits of gossip. "I suppose you have heard that Mrs. Jennings of Cambridge-shire has made a little elopement from her husband to Mr. Levin, for the shame of our sex flies fast, every one tells it, every one listens to it, the single men publish the faux pas in the hopes of making them general, some husbands delight particularly in Mrs. Jennings out of a desire of making the young men ambitious of following Mr. Levin's example & taking their ugly wives off their hands; the women are never silent on this head, the immodest want to bring every one upon an equality with themselves, and the modest are desirous of showing their Virtue by their censures & of setting it off by the comparison of the failings of others, & think to turn to their honour what is really the disgrace of the sexe."

No study touching upon the life of Mrs. Scott since Brydges has failed to make note of the friendship of this lady and Lady Barbara Montagu. Concerning this, it is now possible to add a few bits of information which seemingly have been here-to-fore overlooked in the bulk of the manuscript materials. The actual beginning of this friendship is not known, but all at once, in 1748, in the manuscript letters described above, from which several quotations have

been made, numerous references appear to "Lady Bab." Then, in a letter of August 30, 1748, there appears a definite record as to the condition of the friendship which shows that the two ladies had been spending some time in Sodbury, where, if they did not first meet, it is to be supposed, their long friendship first developed. The letter states, "I came with Lady Bab to her house when we left Sodbury, and have forsaken the River and all its beauties. So pray direct me at Lady Barbara's, Bath." From this time until the death of Lady Bab, the two friends were never separated unless for the briefest of intervals. Certainly for three years, 1748 to 1751, Sarah and Lady Bab were together practically all the time. Then came the marriage of Sarah to George Lewis Scott. According to the custom of the eighteenth century, it was necessary for a newly married couple to have a chaperone. A close friend of the bride's was always asked to perform this service. Who could do this better than Lady Bab? That this is not mere conjecture and that Lady Bab lived with the Scott's during their married life would seem evident from the fact that on September 30, 1751, Mrs. Montagu wrote in a letter to a friend, "Lady Bab and my sister design to visit my solitude in a few days." [32] This does not sound as if Lady Bab were just a chance visitor in the home of Mrs. Scott. It will be remembered too that Mrs. Scott was not at all well, which would make Lady Bab's presence even more plausible. Mr. and Mrs. Scott had moved from Leicester Fields to Chelsea in order that Mrs. Scott might have more fresh air. It is not unlikely that Lady Bab revealed the condition of affairs between the husband and the wife, to Mr. Robinson and his sons which led to their removing Sarah from her husband.[33]

The first notice of George Lewis Scott in the letters written by Sarah Robinson is in 1745. Also, it is in 1745 that the letters of Mrs. Montagu reveal a knowledge of this gentleman.[34] At first he was a friend to Mr. Montagu, through whom he doubtless met Sarah. In one of the letters to Mrs. Montagu, Mr. Scott added the fact that it would give him "vast satisfaction" to see both that lady and "Miss Robinson in Dover Street again." From 1745 to 1748 Miss Robinson and Mr. Scott were nothing more than friends, but with the former's

[32] Climenson, I, 293.
[33] Climenson, II, 5.
[34] Climenson, I, 206.

sojourn in Bath in 1748 matters developed more seriously. Miss Climenson suggests that a misunderstanding which arose between Mrs. Montagu and her sister about 1748 was probably caused by Mr. Scott.[35] The source of Miss Climenson's reference is evidently the letter of August 20, mentioned above, in which the intimacy with Lady Bab is revealed. In it may also be read these words: "That any difference shou'd arise between you and me is as grevious to me as it can be to you, and what I shou'd never begin nor continue, for I hope a friendship begun in infancy is not easily (worn) out, and I assure you, you greatly mistake Mr. Scott in supposing he wou'd wish it ended, for no one can more desire that I shou'd live in happy agreement with my family than he does, not only as he does anything that wou'd contribute to my happiness but also for the satisfaction he himself wou'd enjoy from a good agreement with them. I have many times experienced this in him, and I really don't know what sacrifices I make him that he will have to make me amends for." This letter proves at least two things. It makes clear that the cause of the disagreement between the two sisters was Mr. Scott; and then, what is more important, perhaps, in the present case, shows certainly some more or less definite understanding between the younger sister and the gentleman in question. With this young couple on such friendly terms as the letter suggests, they must have felt that marriage was their ultimate goal. Mr. Scott was probably not in a position to take proper care of a wife at this time though there is no record of what was then his occupation. This would readily account for the fact that the wedding did not take place until 1751. It was in this year that Mr. Scott was made a subpreceptor to the Prince of Wales, and immediately afterwards he and Sarah were married. With the position at court, the young man was financially able to care for a wife.

Miss Climenson seems to have gleaned all the possible information touching upon the married life of the Scotts. No letters written by the young wife are extant for the period from the winter of 1749-50 to 1753, so that recourse must be made to those of Mrs. Montagu and other friends. "Incompatability of tempers" was assigned as the cause for separation, and the two persons most vitally concerned seem to have kept actual details to themselves. It is interesting to

[35] Climenson, I, 270.

note in certain of Mrs. Scott's letters of 1753 and later that she had no regrets over the affair. In speaking of a correspondence with a friend, in a letter to Mrs. Montagu, dated February 3, 1753, Mrs. Scott says, "it contained nothing about Mr. S(cott) or our separation but in answer to a wish of hers, that I knew she wou'd be glad to hear that in my present abode I found all the ease and peace I hoped from it. Her wish was that I might find my situation answer my hopes." This letter partially substantiates Mr. Blunt's statement that the separation "was a success to both."[36] By far the most interesting new material gleaned from Mrs. Scott's own letters is a passage which constitutes a definite addition to the information previously published. Mr. Scott, it would seem, was to give his wife an allowance. In the letter of February 3, named above, Mrs. Scott writes her sister, "I have yet heard nothing of my quarters payment, which as Mr. S.(cott) is paid to a day, and I am always apprehensive, a failure is not perfectly agreeable." And, in the light of this information—quarterly payment—a passage from a letter of December 25, 1756, becomes more nearly intelligible. "I am so little inclin'd to anticipate evils that I feel no alarm about Mr. Scott tho' I apprehend the story of his being designed for a Commissioner of Excise came from Parson Magill who is but poor intelligence." This position would probably mean a smaller financial remuneration which would affect Mrs. Scott as well as Mr. Scott.

Despite the fact that Mrs. Scott was removed from her husband by her father and brothers, at no time does she speak of him in terms of ill will. There is, indeed, usually a note of respect. In 1756, when he actually lost his post as sub-preceptor, two instances of this regard are to be noted. On December 4 (1756), a letter was written to Mrs. Montagu which contained the remark, "I hear Mr. Scott is to be made a Commissioner of the Excise or Customs; a very comfortable Post, and what I shou'd imagine he is particularly qualified for." And again in the letter of December 25th, noted above, she says, "Ly Car: Fox told Lady Bab that to her certain knowledge the Prince of Wales had desired he (Mr. Scott) might not be placed about him, but unless he has committed some very heinous offence against Ld (torn out), I make no doubt of the Princesses providing

[36] Blunt, II, 104-05.

for him, as the contrary wou'd be unparalleled, and not to her honour."

Mr. Scott seems to have lived in London following the separation, and to have commanded a degree of respect from others than his former wife. His domestic relations certainly had no bearing on his position at the court, and in addition to this, his record as a mathematician and a man of science is worthy of praise. Among his friends were Gibbon and Mason, and, less warmly, of course, Walpole. Chalmer's *Biographical Dictionary*[37] says of him, "Scott was a gentleman of considerable talents and general learning; he was well skilled also in the mathematical sciences, for which he manifested at times a critical taste, as may be particularly seen in some letters which, in 1764, passed between him and Dr. Simson of Glasgow, and are inserted in Dr. Trail's account of 'The Life and Writings of Dr. Simson.' Mr. Scott was also the author of the 'Supplement to Chamber's Dictionary,' in two large folios, which was much esteemed. . . ."[38] He died on December 7, 1780.[39] Mrs. Scott's reaction to Mr. Scott's death is not known. No record has been found of his will, but it is likely that his wife had little or no share in it.

"Millenium Hall"—Charitable Interests—Death of Lady Barbara Montagu

After the separation, Mrs. Scott again made her residence in Bath with Lady Bab, and for two years seems to have lived an exceedingly quiet life. Almost no facts are to be found from this period. Then, in the summer of 1754, the two friends took a house in Bath Easton, about two miles from Bath, and began their unique scheme of charitable service. This was a labor of love in which the two women performing it took upon themselves the burdens of the poor of their locality. There was absolute agreement, it would seem, between the two ladies, and no doubt their efforts went far

[37] Vol. 27.

[38] In volume I, of the *Early Diary of Frances Burney* there is a statement that Scott tried to poison his wife just prior to the separation, but there is no foundation for it as the same article points out.

[39] *Harlien Ms.* 48: 1901.
Gentleman's Magazine 50:590.
Blunt, II, 104-5.

toward the goal which was in their minds. Each spring a move was made to Bath Easton for the summer's work, and in the autumn a return was made to Bath where conditions were more comfortable for severe weather. This continued throughout the third period of Mrs. Scott's life, ending with the death of Lady Bab in 1765. No definite record has been found as to the exact date of Lady Bab's death. A letter of April (1765)[40] shows no apprehension of approaching death, but the unfortunate event had occurred before August 23d of that year. On this last named date, Horace Walpole wrote a letter to his friend George Montagu, Lady Barbara's nephew, as follows: "As I know when you love people, you love them, I feel for the concern that the death of Lady Barbara Montagu will give you. Though you have lived long out of the way of seeing her, you are not a man to forget by absence."[41] Mrs. Scott stayed in Bath for a short time, at least, after the event, for Mrs. Montagu made her a visit there in September, 1765, but nothing is recorded in her correspondence touching upon Lady Bab's death.[42]

Returning to the letters in their more general sense, the tone of seriousness which gradually developed after about 1748 is seen in the attitude toward illness. Before 1748 it had been looked upon as a more or less natural occurrence—nothing to cause worry. Now it became a problem to be handled with care. Regrets were expressed in the early letters at Mrs. Montagu's ill health, for instance, but after 1748, remedies were suggested, diets encouraged, and precautions urged. The letters, it is true, continue to tell much about the life at Bath, but there is not the same spirited interest as in 1743. The character drawing is perhaps sharper, but the scope of observation is more restricted, the interest in human foibles less lively.

When letters begin to appear again in 1753, Sarah is a married woman, separated from her husband, which means that her social interests have to be pushed into the background. Still she does not become pessimistic or sour at the world. There are admirable passages of gossip, many letters about health and the ways and means of preserving it, instances of wide reading, etc. One difference,

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[40] Blunt, I, 185.

[41] *Letters from the Honorable Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq., from the Year* 1736 *to the Year* 1770. 2nd edition. Letter CCXI, 362.

[42] Blunt, I, 128.

however, is clearly marked. Previously, life had offered sufficient entertainment to keep the young lady busy, but now it is necessary for her to set about seeking occupations to fill her days. In the efforts to keep busy, at least two types of work appear. First, Mrs. Scott put her thoughts into book form, hoping, as she caused the Princess to explain in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* to teach people to live proper lives by example rather than by rule; and second, Mrs. Scott and Lady Bab took their house in Bath Easton and there carried on their new form of practical charity work.

Besides the detailed picture of this latter work in the novel, *Millenium Hall,* there is extant, a letter written by Mrs. Montagu to her friend, Dr. West.[43] This letter throws such light upon Mrs. Scott's manner of life that its content must be noted. It shows that she started her day in the early morning by having prayers with the group of people around her, after which, she arranged work for twelve girls who were being educated free of cost. Next came a class in arithmetic, taught by her for such girls as were "more than ordinarily capable." The chief work of these girls was that of preparing child-bed linens and clothes for needy people of the community, and then Lady Bab and Sarah saw to the proper distribution of the things according to the most pressing needs. The letter points out the fact that on Sunday mornings the girls, together with a like number of little boys who were also being educated, met for religious work. First, parts of the catechism were repeated; second, parts of the Bible were read; and last, Mrs. Scott explained the principles of the faith. After all this, the group went in a body to the parish church. Mrs. Montagu seemed afraid that her picture of her sister's activities would not be properly understood; so she explained that many Methodist ladies did similar work at times, because of religious enthusiasm, but that her sister was a thoroughly rational being, remaining calm and normal, and doing the work out of love for service. "Her conversation is lively and easy," explains Mrs. Montagu. Mrs. Scott and Lady Bab are said "to go often to plays," and to attend Balls and other social functions. The letter is brought to a close with a picture of their residences at Bath and Bath Easton. Both are pretty, and "adorned by the ingenuity of the owners," and

[43] Climenson, II, 78-79.

in this, always kept within the limits of a small income. "My sister seems happy . . . Lady Bab Montagu concurs with her in all these things, and their convent, for by its regularity it resembles one, is really a cheerful place." A more delightful sketch of the occupation of the summer would be difficult to imagine. Splendidly qualified for this service through a religious temperament, and having, in a manner, put the world behind her, Mrs. Scott was probably the moving force, with Lady Bab playing an important role as a ready assistant.

So definite a record cannot be given of their joint life as it was lived during the winters. There are, however, some bits of information upon the point scattered through the letters. With the arrival of cold weather, and the return to Bath, it seems that various sorts of work, embroidery, knitting, and other fancy labors, were carried along, and that these things were kept on hand and sold to friends upon occasion. That is, a small gift shop business was probably a part of the winter life. In a letter of May, 1755, written by Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. Scott, we may read, "Monday brought me the pleasure of your letter and the mittens; I have never beheld butterflies with so much respect; usually the emblems of frivolity, consecrated by charity they grow as respectable as birds of paradise, and I beg the favour of another dozen of mittens."[44] Mrs. Montagu, then, was one of the good customers of the materials handled in the little shop. The phrase "consecrated by charity," makes clear the occasion of their being in the hands of Mrs. Scott. That is, they were made by the women around Bath Easton. In a later letter to Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Scott tells of some gauzes which, "have not yet reached us. You may depend on our endeavours to dispose of them as well as we possibly can, and as soon as we have had any success You shall know. I have enclosed forty-five flowers and the rest shall follow as fast as possible." And again, in a letter of December 25, 1755, Mrs. Scott says, "I fear we must lower the price of your little work-woman's performances, for people complain they are dear, and none but the hood are bought, however, we will do our best." Mrs. Montagu was interested in the work of her sister,[45] and as suggested by the

[44] Montagu, Matthew, *Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu,* IV.

[45] Mrs. Montagu visited her sister and Lady Bab at Bath Easton in October, 1755, September, 1756, July, 1757, and at least one more time in October, 1761.

"gauzes" and the "little workwoman's performances" above, she was probably aiding the women of her own community by sending their handiwork to Mrs. Scott in the hope of having it sold.

During the period of eleven years, 1754-1765, the activities were stopped only by an occasional spell of illness. In August 1756, Sarah was ill with the fever and was taken to Clifton[46] by Lady Bab, where the waters soon restored her health, and at a later time, Lady Bab was taken to Hitcham by Mrs. Scott for the sake of gaining better health. Of course, there were business trips to London, occasionally, but they were a part of the scheme of work, and not interruptions.

After 1753, the letters are serious to the extent of even speaking of age and the passing of time. For instance, a letter of 1755 says, "at my age," though she was only thirty-two. There is also a touch of philosophy which is not found in the earlier writings. On July 30, 1756, writing to Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Scott says, "Were I of the common opinion that we feel less a misfortune which we expect, I shou'd hope the preparation you have had must lighten your grief, as there was no room to suppose the event you now lament wou'd not happen in a few years; (a strong reason to deter us from suffering our affections to be strongly placed on any one far advanced in the vale of Years), but for my own part I have always found expectations to have the contrary effect, and sudden misfortunes to be best borne as they find the mind in a stronger and more vigorous state; whereas the fear of evils we forsee depress and wear out our spirits and render us less able to support them when they happen, besides our hearts are tenderized by our apprehensions, and we never love a person so much as when we fear losing them." This letter was in reply to Mrs. Montagu's account of the failing health of her husband who was nearly thirty years older than she. Its analysis of the situation is characteristic of the serious attitude towards life which Mrs. Scott took as she grew older.

Last Years

With the cessation of the good work at Bath Easton as a result of Lady Bab's death, Mrs. Scott's position must have been indeed sad. The close friendship had extended over a period of seventeen

[46] Climenson, II, 93.

years. The two women had come to depend on each other, and now Mrs. Scott was left alone. Few other people had come into her life in the way of close friends. Indeed, the work at Bath Easton, at least, was of such a nature as to discourage intimate social relations with any outside a very limited circle, so that now Mrs. Scott was without a place to turn. It is true, of course, that her sister was at hand, and that the two were ever the best of friends, but their lives moved in widely differing spheres. Mrs. Montagu had become interested in town life, literary salons, celebrities of various sorts, travels abroad. She was a leader in that brilliant eighteenth century life for which London was justly famous. Into all this, Mrs. Scott, loving quiet and simplicity, could not fit. One glimpse that we have of her at one of Mrs. Montagu's evening companies confirms this impression. It is found in a letter of the year 1776, written by Hannah More. The letter reads, "There were eighteen persons assembled at dinner, but after the repast, she has a method of dividing her guests, or rather letting them assort themselves into little groups of five or six each. I spent my time in going from one of the little societies to the other, as I happened more or less to like the subjects they were discussing. Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Montagu's sister, a very good writer, Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Barbauld, and a man of letters, whose name I have forgotten, made up one of these little parties."[47] The incident implies a narrow range of interests. One has to realize that Mrs. Scott could never now be genuinely happy with her magnificent sister. On the other hand, Mrs. Montagu was not of the temperament, nor had she the time to share intimately in the modest sort of work in which Mrs. Scott was happiest.

It is no surprise, therefore, to find that after 1765 Mrs. Scott is gradually lost from sight. That she kept up a constant correspondence with Mrs. Montagu is practically certain, but most of such letters are lost. What few notes remain reveal an interest in life which continued keen even to the time of her death in 1795, but one reads between the lines that the lady is getting old, is suffering from poor health, is almost alone in the world, and indeed, is ready to bid adieu to life.

[47] *Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More,* edited by William Roberts, 1834, Vol. I, 62-3.

The details gleaned from the notes contribute little in filling out the picture of these years. One thing, however, they do clearly prove: the truth of Brydges' words, "restlessness was one of her foibles." For a short period following August, 1765, Mrs. Scott was at Bath. When she is next heard of in 1768, Mrs. Montagu has sent her a stock of provisions—"fowls, pigs, vegetables, etc., from Sandleford," to Hitcham[48] which is called Mrs. Scott's "new home." This residence was probably of short duration, for Mr. Blunt mentions her undergoing a course of treatment by Dr. Domenicenti, a famous quack doctor of Cheney Walk, Chelsea,[49] in the latter part of the year 1768, for headaches. These afflictions had long caused much suffering for Mrs. Scott and it was hoped that the baths in Domenicenti's establishment would produce a cure. Although there is no record of the duration of the treatments, the next sight of the lady, gained from Brydges,[50] shows her visiting in London with Mrs. Montagu, in November of 1770. Traces are lost between 1770 and 1774, when, according to letters, Mrs. Scott joined her sister at Tunbridge Wells.[51] It would seem that the visit to Tunbridge Wells was prolonged for some time, though in June of 1775 there is a record of a visit to Sandleford.[52] With poorer health than usual, Mrs. Montagu and Sandleford were deserted after only a short visit in favor of Bath where relief was sought.[53] It is quite likely that this sojourn in Bath lasted for about two years. Certain it is that Bath was the residence in 1777, for it seems that she wrote a letter to Mrs. Montagu giving a report of the "rebellion" of the American colonies. Mrs. Montagu's reply to her sister's letter says, "Bath reports, like Bath head dresses (though in the mode of the time), are a little exaggerated."[54] If nothing else, Mrs. Scott is certainly still interested in public events, especially those with a political flavor. In October of 1779, Mrs. Montagu, writing from London to a

[48] Mrs. Scott visited at Hitcham on several occasions. Her cousin, Grace Robinson, who had married the Rev. William Freind, had a house at Hitcham. Also, Mrs. Scott took Lady Bab there in 1756 for her health. See: Blunt, I, 167.
[49] Blunt, I, 175.
[50] *Censura Literaria*, III, 147.
[51] Blunt, I, 284.
[52] Ibid. I, 300.
[53] Doran, p. 202.
[54] Blunt, II, 16.

friend, says, "My sister arrived here on Tuesday."[55] Then, there is another lapse of time between 1779 and 1784, during which there is no trace of Mrs. Scott, but in the latter year she is again found in London.[56] During this London period she was commissioned to keep Mrs. Montagu, who was at Sandleford, posted on the "doings of the world," a duty "for which," as Mr. Blunt suggests, "she was admirably qualified."[57] At least as early as 1787, Mrs. Scott took up her residence, as noted above, at Catton, a peaceful hamlet about two miles from Norwich. This place then remained her home practically all of the remaining eight years of her life.[58]

As late as 1778, Mrs. Scott was still slightly interested in literary work, for in that year a fourth edition of her book, *Millenium Hall,* was issued. From that time on, though, there is no deep interest to be noted in her life. With no one to lean on she was more or less helpless. Drifting about, in a vain effort to be relieved of the headaches, was her chief occupation. No friends are mentioned save the sister-in-law, Mrs. William Robinson, to whom a few letters are addressed; no mingling in society generally with the possible exception of attendance on an occasional gathering while visiting Mrs. Montagu; the last days could hardly be called happy.

Personal Appearance

Little or no definite knowledge has been found as to the appearance of Sarah Robinson Scott. That she was known as the "Pea" because she and her sister were "as like as two peas" is, however, a clue to the matter. No portrait remains of Mrs. Scott, but there are several of Mrs. Montagu, both before and after her marriage. These pictures reveal a woman, small in stature and slight in build. The face is expressive, the forehead broad and suggestive of the superior intelligence displayed by the lady; the eyes full of native sparkle and an appreciation of things of beauty. Nose, mouth, and chin are well formed, though the first is somewhat prominent, and the head is held high on its thin but shapely neck and shoulders.

[55] Ibid. II, 73.
[56] Ibid. II, 174.
[57] Ibid. II, 174.
[58] Ibid. II, 210, 295, 321.

A description of Mrs. Montagu is found in Rebecca Warner's volume of letters[59] collected from the writings of twelve well known persons. "In her youth her beauty was most admired in the peculiar animation and expression of her blue eyes, with high, arched, dark eyebrows, and in the contrast of her brilliant complexion with her dark brown hair. She was of the middle stature and stooped a little which gave an air of modesty to her countenance, in which the features were otherwise, so strongly marked, as to express an elevation of sentiment befitting the most exalted condition. As she advanced in age, her appearance was distinguished by that superiority of demeanor which was acquired by the habit of intercourse with persons of cultivated talents and polished manners. Her very look bespoke the fire of genius, arising from strength of taste and solidity of judgment." Of this picture, the first portion only should be applied to Mrs. Scott —that is, blue eyes, brown hair, brilliant complexion, middle stature, and general animation. The two girls were unquestionably much alike in looks up to 1741, at which time, the younger sister suffered the ravages of smallpox. After this time, no further reference is made to the "Pea" when speaking of Sarah. The marks of the illness were in all probability clearly in evidence, and it is not unlikely that this fact explains the lack of portraits of the younger sister. She was never particularly vain, but few women would be willing to have a portrait made in which the marks from smallpox would show, and one can believe that Sarah Robinson was the sort of young woman who would refuse to allow her picture to be done without showing the whole truth.

Mrs. Scott was never robust in physique. Amongst references to the health, in letters to her sister, one of 1753 remarks: "no one can be thinner nor lower spirited, have worse nerves or be much weaker than I was, and yet in every one of these respects it (a special diet) has done me great service, except that I am not at all more corpulent than when I began." Another note, also regarding a special diet, reads, "I hope your cold has left you; between my milk diet and the approach of winter, I am robb'd of some pounds of flesh since I saw you, but have not had a bad headache since the day you left us,

[59] *Original Letters,* 1817.

and at my age, ease is a better thing than l'embonpoint." Certainly then, it seems the lady was slight of figure.

With the years, Mrs. Montagu became more and more "Distinguished by that superiority of demeanor," while Mrs. Scott, in her quiet life, became more modest and retiring. Yet, as late at 1755 there is still a suggestion of the resemblance of the two sisters. "In supporting a Sisterly resemblance you make me a greater compliment than I fear I can lay claim to." Being a woman, Mrs. Scott enjoyed the kind words, but at the same time, she was sane minded enough to measure her own looks against those of Mrs. Montagu and realize the difference.

As a young woman, Mrs. Scott showed a normal love for styles and personal adornment. Miss Climenson cites a letter in which the young lady is apprehensive of the proper size of hoops for her new clothes and thus writes up to London for the latest information.[60] Many later letters show the same interest in the latest wearing apparel. In 1744, she writes of plans to go to London to "get my great coat made and other such matters in dress order'd and alter'd." She was not, however, an extravagant young woman as can be seen in a letter telling of a scheme for making an old dress look like new by a process of dye and additional flounces instead of purchasing a new one. This sort of economy was, in all probability, worth much at "Millenium Hall" and afterwards.

In keeping with the styles in dress, the eighteenth century beauty parlor was often necessary. In the correspondence one finds information on this score. She writes at one time, "I am now curling in a most royal manner," despite the fact that her precious head was "in some danger of being Burnt." She sends this delightful picture with the typically feminine observation, "I venture the danger for the sake of the advantage that may accrue." Another letter (July 7, 1749), tells of an accident which made a sad though temporary alteration in looks. "I broke out one of my upper fore teeth," she writes, but she dared not allow a dentist at Bath do the necessary work, preferring to wait until a trip could be made to London. But, with the years, this interest in personal adornment passed and she came to have almost a disregard for herself as long as she could find physical comfort.

[60] Climenson, I, 64.

This indifference is made clear, at least in one instance, by her treating the loss of an eyebrow as a joke. The incident is recorded in a letter of March 1, 1778, addressed to Mrs. William Robinson.[61] A night cap she was wearing had caught fire and she had been rather painfully burned about the face and neck, but she refused to look upon the situation with any degree of seriousness, pointing rather to the fact that it did not matter since she had no need for the usual embellishments of beauty. The condition of her face was of no consequence. Such a reference, alone, would tend to corroborate Sir Egerton Brydges' summary of Mrs. Scott's personality: "With abilities of a superior cast, and distinguished literary attainments, there was a mixture of eccentricity in the character." [62] However such traits of personality may have struck her contemporaries, or even, to some extent, kept her from a greater degree of personal happiness and worldly success than she actually experienced, they certainly do not impair the interest of her life in retrospect.

In her small way, Mrs. Scott was a notable woman. Though this study was undertaken in the first place because she was a writer of certain books, and though that fact is her most certain claim upon remembrance, it is hardly conceivable that these books themselves will ever be read again by any but an occasional student. Yet, in them, little more than particles of dust laden story though they seem, there is an instinctive germ of something very much alive today, for whatever ends Providence may intend it. Mrs. Scott was one of a band of eighteenth century pioneers, to which belong Sarah Fielding, sister of the great Henry, Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, Mrs. Sheridan, mother of Brinsley, and other younger women, the intellectual Miss Hannah More, lively Fanny Burney, who became the staid Madame D'Arblay, and the more independent minded Charlotte Smith, the learned Mrs. Barbauld, and many others, all of whom became known by their labors of the pen, a pen that was employed in the service of living morality, and, though they may not have been overly self-conscious of it, the vindication of their sex. At a time when women were not expected to be self-supporting or to do any independent thinking, these women stepped from the ordinary ranks with their works. Mrs. Scott, who

[61] Mrs. Robinson was the wife of Mrs. Scott's next youngest brother, the Rev. William Robinson. See: Doran, p. 233.

[62] *Censura Literaria,* II, 178.

was one of the earliest of this early group, added to her efforts that "social service" work, already described, which was centered at Bath Easton, a type of work which in that century became equally as sympathetic as thus literary, and which like it has grown to such enormous proportions in our time.

CHAPTER II

DATA CONCERNING MRS. SCOTT'S LITERARY WORK

Mrs. Scott's life is interesting from various angles, but it is the reflection of that life in literary form that is most interesting to the student of Literature. Her efforts, indeed, were feeble as compared with the work of the outstanding novelists of the age, with Richardson's, or Fielding's, or Smollett's, yet, at the same time, in her case as in others, there is value in the study of a minor writer. If there is less of the quality of greatness, there is often more of the common clay on which most men live, and which provides a common basis for sympathetic understanding. Often, too, one has the interesting experience of finding in minor writers of the past, the beginning of ideas or movements that are very important in one's own time. Thus, in Mrs. Scott's case, retiring though she was in spirit, one finds that she did much in her quiet way for the movement which made a new day for women, despite the fact that she consistently refused to acknowledge the authorship of any of her publications.

Sir Egerton Brydges was the first person to make an effort to list the works of Mrs. Scott,[1] and it is on his record that this study is based. That the list is worthy of trust is fairly certain in view of the fact that Mr. Brydges was the son-in-law of the Rev. William Robinson, who was Mrs. Scott's next youngest brother. Thus, as a member of the family, Mr. Brydges had access to definite information, and too, since he was born in 1762, he had ample opportunity to know the lady personally. It is upon this authority, then—that of Sir Egerton Brydges—that the works discussed herein are assigned to the pen of Mrs. Sarah Scott. In addition, there is evidence for assigning a few other pieces to this list. Such additions will be duly noted.

In the following pages, it is my purpose to describe Mrs. Scott's work as an author, by grouping, first, a list of title page information gathered from her nine published works; second, short synopses of

[1] See above, p. 10.

these same works; and third, a compilation of the contemporary and later critical notices of the volumes. It is hoped by this means to bring Mrs. Scott, the author, into a clearer light, where she can be seen in her proper relation to the eighteenth century novel in general.

Title Page Information

The first of Mrs. Scott's works appeared while she was still Sarah Robinson. It was a novel, *The History of Cornelia,* published simultaneously, or at least in the same year, as is seen from the evidence at hand, both in London and Dublin. Such duplication in the publication of books was quite common in the eighteenth century, either with or without the consent of the author. Mr. Brydges' list[2] is the authority for the London publication; the copy of the novel owned by the British Museum and which was used in making this study is the evidence for Dublin. That the book did not create much interest in literary circles seems certain since there are no editions other than of 1750.

The year 1754 saw two works by Mrs. Scott. R. and J. Dodsley published the novel, *Agreeable Ugliness, or the Triumph of the Graces. Exemplified in the Real Life and Fortunes of a Young Lady of some Distinction.* Like the first novel, this one was published anonymously. Then, following close after this work, A. Millar had the sale of the two volume novel, or rather two volumes of short stories, entitled, *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life, Described in a Variety of Interesting Scenes Drawn from Real Characters.* The author of this work was said to be "A Person of Quality," but no further immediate identity is hinted at. Only short reviews appeared regarding these two works, and the fact that there were no subsequent editions reveals a lack of popularity. Mr. Brydges lists these two works in reverse order, but the *Monthly Review* shows *Agreeable Ugliness* as coming from the press before *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life.*

Probably because of the poor success of the three works of fiction, Mrs. Scott published nothing for a period of seven years following 1754, during which time she was kept busy with the charitable project at Bath Easton. When she did return to the field of writing, it was

[2] See above, p. 10.

with a history rather than a novel. A historical biography, *The History of Gustavus Ericson, King of Sweden, with an Introductory History of Sweden from the Middle of the 12th Century,* was published for A. Millar in 1761. In this case, the author used a pseudonym. The title page of the volume bears the information, "By Henry Augustus Raymond, Esq."[3] It is a pretty clear case that there was never such a person as Henry Augustus Raymond, and that Mrs. Scott hit upon the name more or less by accident. Apparently the author hoped thus by a male pseudonym either to hide her identity more successfully or to secure better sales. Only one edition of this work appeared.

In 1761 George III made public his plans to take Sophia Charlotte, Princess of Mecklenburgh, for his queen. The English people, as a whole, knew nothing of the land of Mecklenburgh, but with their queen coming from there, interest in it grew keen. Mrs. Scott seems to have felt the public demand for knowledge, which, backed by a personal interest in things historical, gave rise to the next publication, *The History of Mecklenburgh, from the First Settlement of the Vandals in that Country to the Present Time; Including a Period of about Three Thousand Years.* The first edition of this history was issued sometime prior to June, 1762, and a second edition (which was used in this study), appeared before the end of the year. Both editions were printed for J. Newbery, but not even a hint is given as to the author. The public interest in such a momentous affair as the king's marriage was responsible for the popularity of the book.

The year 1762 also saw another work from Mrs. Scott's pen, one which is much superior in every way to the history. It is *A Description of Millenium Hall and the Country Adjacent, together with the Characters of the Inhabitants and such Historical Anecdotes and Reflections as may excite in the Reader proper Sentiments of Humanity, and lead the Mind to the Love of Virtue,* printed also for J. Newbery. In this instance, the author is said to be "A Gentleman on his Travels," though it was known that Mrs. Scott was the chief figure in the composition of the story, with the possible help of Lady Barbara Montagu.[4] That this novel experienced a degree of popu-

[3] See: *Censura Literaria,* II, 177-78.

[4] Horace Walpole's copy of the second edition of this work, 1764, which is in the British Museum, has a note on the fly leaf which says the two ladies collaborated.

larity not known to any of the other works is seen in the fact that a second edition was published in 1764, a third in 1767, and still a fourth in 1778. J. Newbery handled the first three editions, while his successors, T. Carnan and F. Newbery sold the last.

After a lapse of four years following the first edition of the last novel, there appeared a sort of sequel—*The History of Sir George Ellison,* printed for A. Millar, 1766. This is a two volume work for which there is no reference of any sort to an author, but both from Sir Egerton Brydges' list and from the story itself, Mrs. Scott was the author. No further editions of this novel were printed, though there is extant a condensed form of the same story, bearing the title, *The Man of Real Sensibility, or the History of Sir George Ellison,* printed for Chapman Whitcomb, but without a date. No later printing of this latter book, only forty pages in length, was made in England.[5] The copy of the work which is in the British Museum is assigned to the questionable date, 1770, or four years later than the longer work on the same theme. W. L. Courtney, in his article on Mrs. Scott for the *Dictionary of National Biography,* evidently thinks the shorter form came first, for he says of it that it "was afterwards expanded into 'The History of Sir George Ellison'." Satisfactory evidence to settle the question is lacking, but two conjectures present themselves. First, it is obvious that Mrs. Scott was especially interested in the character of Mr. Ellison.[6] He was the one genuine hero type of her mind. Perhaps the two volume edition was not as popular as she wished it to be—no extra editions were necessary, it will be remembered. She might have felt that the public would read the story in a more condensed form and be led to better living as a result of the good teachings. Or, perhaps Mr. Courtney is correct and the short form was written first and later expanded to greater length. But, it would seem only fair to give the two volume work to the same printer who published the small edition, if this were the case. On the other hand, it is barely possible that Mrs. Scott was

[5] The Library of Congress owns a copy of *The Man of Real Sensibility,* published by H. Kammer, Philadelphia, 1797. This edition is smaller in size than the English printing, and thus contains ninety-two pages, but it is seemingly a reproduction of materials.

[6] In reading the History of Sir George Ellison, one learns that he was the "Gentleman on his Travels" who is supposed to have written *Millenium Hall.* Thus, he had been in Mrs. Scott's mind for years.

not responsible for the condensed form of the story at all—that it was a piracy. Why she should have been at all interested in the story stripped of most of its embellishments, is difficult to imagine. The small volume is an exact reproduction of the full work except for the addition of a greater number of adventures in the latter. This fact, at first thought, might cast doubt on the idea of piracy, but there are other instances of similar occurrences, and condensed versions of popular novels seem to have had a certain vogue.[7] In the light of the facts above stated, it would seem that the British Museum date of 1770 is more reliable than Mr. Courtney's supposition, and that in all probability *The Man of Real Sensibility* is not the work of Mrs. Scott, but rather a piracy.

The early months of 1772 saw the appearance of an epistolary novel, *The Test of Filial Duty, in a Series of Letters between Miss Emilia Leonard and Miss Charlotte Arlington,* Dublin, printed for D. Chamberlaine, J. Potts, J. Williams, T. Walker, and C. Jenkins. There is no copy of this novel in the British Museum, in any of the larger libraries of London, or in either of the great University libraries—Oxford and Cambridge.[8] The fact that the copy of this work used in this study was printed in Dublin, and that the Sir Egerton Brydges list of works refers to a London publication, creates an interesting question. The *Censura Literaria,* quoting from a title page, seemingly, says, "London, for the Author, Sold by T. Carnan, No. 65, St. Paul's Churchyard, 1772." This would imply that at least two printings were made of *The Test of Filial Duty,* even though no later edition appeared. No copy of the work as published in London, however, has been located during the present investigation. The dual printing, however, may be just another instance of the Irish printers of the eighteenth century, who were outside the power of the copyright act, making free use of popular works issued in London.[9]

The last of Mrs. Scott's literary efforts took her again to bio-

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[7] For instance, of Richardson's. One interesting example of the latter which I have seen is of *Pamela,* New York, 1796, the story reduced to narrative form and distributed into proper chapters. Similar earlier examples of *Clarissa,* etc., are recorded.

[8] The copy of *The Test of Filial Duty* used in this study is in the private library of Mr. Godfrey Singer of Philadelphia.

[9] See: C. H. E. L. Vol. XI, 379.
Also, see Richardson's postscript to *Sir Charles Grandison.*

graphical history. *The Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné, containing a Succinct Account of the most remarkable Occurrences during the Civil Wars of France in the Reigns of Charles IX, Henry III, Henry IV, and in the Minority of Lewis XIII* was printed for Edward and Charles Dilly in 1772. No subsequent edition of this work appeared, nor even a reprint in England.[10] As elsewhere, the author remained unknown so far as the title page was concerned.

Synopses of the Nine Works

In order properly to appreciate the critical notices which were issued during Mrs. Scott's lifetime and later, one needs some little knowledge of the content of the various stories and histories. The synopses of the nine works which follow have included only the barest amount of detail, but it is believed, sufficient to make clear the discussion which is to follow.

The History of Cornelia

Because of Octavio's violent passion for his niece Cornelia, the young lady ran away from her home. Hardships of the first days caused illness, which was made easier by the presence of a young gentleman, Bernardo, who fell in love with the girl. Forced to leave her lover, Cornelia went to Paris where Mr. de Rhone saved her from disgrace. Then followed a happy period with Madame du Maine which was ended by Mr. de Rheés, who kidnapped the young lady, hoping to force his love upon her. Escaping this, Cornelia went as companion to Lucinda de la Roche, who turned out to be the sister of Bernardo. According to reports, however, Bernardo was a false lover, though Cornelia continued to love him.

In company with her friend, Julia, Cornelia met Mr. de Rhone and had the pleasure of seeing these two people fall in love and get married. Next came a trip to Paris where Bernardo made his appearance. Given a chance, he disproved the charges against his love for Cornelia and plans were started for marriage. Trouble appeared first through Mr. de Rheés which led to a fight between this man

[10] In the United States, however, a reprint of this work was made at Philadelphia, J. M. Campbell and Co., 1843.

and Bernardo, and the latter's imprisonment. Release from prison was gained through a personal plea made by Cornelia to the King. A second trouble came through the appearance of Octavio, who blocked the marriage. A secret flight and wedding defeated Octavio's plans, but a third cause for trouble came through Cornelia's being kidnapped, in error, and carried to Spain. On the return from Spain, both Cornelia and Bernardo found themselves possessors of large fortunes, which they employed in making their community comfortable and happy.

Agreeable Ugliness

Two daughters were born to the de Villiers family. The older was beautiful, but pampered, vain, petty, and even mean in spirit; while the younger, though lacking beauty and called by the mother the "Shocking Monster," had a kind heart, keen mind, and loving disposition, all of which traits were developed through the guidance of the father. The first contrast of the sisters is shown in their actions at the home of Lady Beaumont. The "Fair Villiers" made a conquest of the hearts of all the men and disgraced herself, while the sister, through her kindness, made fast friends of all.

Mr. Dorigny, a neighbor, after being first refused by the older daughter, took the second as his wife. The wedding trip was made to Paris where Mr. Dorigny was killed in trying to protect his sister-in-law from being kidnapped. This affair made it difficult for that young lady to find a suitable husband, but at last she married the Baron de Aubercour, which led to much unhappiness. Mrs. Dorigny, as a widow, had several proposals of marriage, but she was in love with young St. Furcy, whom she had known at the Beaumonts. After several trying experiences, the last being an offer of marriage from the father of the young St. Furcy, the son of the old gentleman and Mrs. Dorigny were married. They led happy and useful lives together, blessing all with whom they came in contact.

A Journey Through Every Stage of Life

The Princess Carinthia is entertained by her old nurse, Sabrina, with a series of tales tending to show that life is never so bad but that it could be worse.

1. To escape marriage with an old man, Leonara left home. Joined by Louisa, her cousin, she provided for their physical needs. Their experiences were numerous and trying, but led to happy marriages and useful lives in the end.

2. Colin a shepherd, loved Peggy, but death claimed him just before the wedding day. His worthy life and influence, however, extended even after death, being always a blessing to the land.

3. Cleantho went abroad to gain experience. He lost his money and friends and was forced to return home, where he found his faithful Alinda waiting. The marriage led to much happiness.

4. Both Felix and Rinaldo loved Theodora, but she took Rinaldo for husband. Unhappiness followed till death removed the husband. Then Felix begged to be, and was, accepted. This led to Felix's death from a broken heart, because he was never able to gain the love of his wife.

5. Honoria's beauty led her to popularity and then disgrace. She retired to the country, however, and met Pedro, which brought happiness.

6. Harriott and Augustus loved each other from childhood, but the boy's father wanted to marry the girl. Finding their plans for marriage blocked, the two young people died broken hearted.

7. Leontius tried to aid all people in need, but found only ingratitude. He retired to the country and found Caroline, whom he married, which led to great happiness.

8. Mr. Rivers and Miss Davers married without parental consent. After five years they fell heirs to a fortune. Mr. Rivers then had an affair with Miss Reynolds, to whom a son was born. The child was given to Mrs. Rivers and made to seem her baby, but a few years later, just before her death, she revealed the truth. Later Miss Reynolds was located and all ended peacefully.

The History of Gustavus Ericson

During the early years of the sixteenth century, the Danes laid successful claim to Sweden. They held Gustavus Ericson, the strongest Swedish leader, captive for several years while they won city after city by force of arms. Stockholm fell in 1520.

At last Gustavus made his escape but found his people slow

in giving assistance. The Archbishop favored the Danes and, indeed, was the most formidable enemy of the cause of freedom. In 1522, the Swedish States-General named Gustavus as Administrator and pledged definite aid. Soon, much of the land was freed from the invaders, and peace was temporarily established at the death of the Danish King Christiern. This lull in activities was used in an attempt to force the clergy into line with the native cause, but success was slight.

In 1523 a rift with the States-General caused Gustavus to resign his post, but he was soon recalled and given increased powers. The title of King was added in 1528, and at that time, the daughter of a neighboring king was taken as queen.

A Danish invasion, religious troubles between the Catholics and Lutherans, conspiracies of various sorts, plus the death of two successive wives, were a few of the troubles which Gustavus had to meet. Overcoming every obstacle, Gustavus died in 1560, leaving the land prosperous, commerce thriving, schools and hospitals functioning properly, a state religion established, and his son Eric as king. No better King than Gustavus ever ruled over Sweden.

The History of Mecklenburgh

The book sketches three thousand years of history (1200 B.C. to 1761 A.D.) during which time there was an almost ceaseless series of battles. The fact that the kingdom continued intact throughout the years shows a tenacity on the part of the rulers. No great strides forward mark the years, however, partly, perhaps, on account of the jealousies existing between the various German rulers. The list of battles, alliances, arbitrations, and kings, is appalling, and especially so when it is remembered that the events were not important outside the little section of the country in which they occurred.

The first two thousand years of the history are covered rapidly, but thereafter the account is too detailed to be easy reading. A careful record is given of the immediate fore-fathers of the Princess, though she herself appears in the work only at the very end where it is learned that she was born May the 16th, 1744, and was mar-

ried at St. James' on the eighth of September, 1761, "to a Monarch, whose virtues are still more exalted than his station."

A Description of Millenium Hall

A broken carriage led two gentlemen to walk toward a large country house—Millenium Hall—where they found a most unusual situation: a group of ladies carrying on a sort of charitable work. Five women were chiefly responsible for the work. Their respective histories make up the bulk of the volume.

Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel met in school. Mrs. Morgan had been forced later to marry her husband, in which life she was unhappy till his death. Miss Mancel had seemingly been an orphan which made it impossible for her to marry the man of her choice. Her mother was located later, by accident, but the young man had died in the mean time. Thus, after her mother's death, which came about the time of Mr. Morgan's last days, the two friends joined their fortunes and started the work at Millenium Hall.

Lady Mary Jones joined Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel after Lady Bramton died leaving her a fortune. Life had not been kind to Lady Mary but she found happiness at Millenium Hall.

Mrs. Selvyn, supposedly the daughter of a merchant, lived near the home of Lady Reynolds. In time it was learned that Lady Reynolds was really the girl's mother. Lady Reynold's fortune at her death, went to the girl who in turn joined the Millenium Hall workers.

Harriott Trantham, beloved of her cousin Alworthy, and reared by a kind grandmother, saw her lover turn to another young woman and enter an unhappy marriage. Later, with the fortune inherited from the grandmother, Mrs. Trantham accepted an invitation to join the group at Millenium Hall in their good work.

The History of Sir George Ellison[11]

George Ellison, when twenty-one years of age, went to Jamaica to seek his fortune. His success was great and in a few years he had a thriving business and a family. Then calamity came—the

[11] This same synopsis answers for *The Man of Real Sensibility,* which is a condensed form of the same story.

son was sent to England to be educated, the wife died, and the grieving husband, following his son to England, arrived just in time to bury his own father. Broken in health, Mr. Ellison was advised to travel over England. On this journey he stopped at Millenium Hall and learned of the work going on there.

Later, Mr. Ellison bought an estate in the country and settled down. His plan was to do for his community what he had seen at Millenium Hall. In the course of time he fell in love with Miss Allin, the daughter of a neighbor, but she was engaged to Dr. Trumbull which cooled Mr. Ellison's ardor.

Mr. Ellison was kept busy finding work for the idle, food and clothing for the needy, and looking after the education of the children of the community. Then Dr. Trumbull died, and after a proper period of time, again Mr. Ellison proposed marriage to the lady and was accepted. The happiness was great, for in addition to having a well ordered home, Mr. Ellison was honored by being knighted. He was "envied by none, but adored by all . . . a father to the fatherless and a protector to the widow . . . a comforter to the afflicted—and a friend to the whole human race."

The Test of Filial Duty

Emilia Leonard's letters to Charlotte Arlington, her cousin, tell two stories—that of her half-sister Sophia, and that of herself. Sophia was cruel hearted, vain, and shallow. Her father planned for her to marry a cousin, the son of Sir Joseph Leonard, but she was not willing to be guided. As a result, she at last ran away, married a Scotchman, and led an unhappy life. Emilia, on the other hand, was loved by young Mr. Leonard, but they were not permitted to marry because Sir Joseph wished to make the girl his own wife. At last, Emilia was allowed to retire to Wales rather than marry Sir Joseph whom she did not love, but her true lover located her after a long search. After several months, Sir Joseph died and with Sophia married, no further objections could be found to prevent the two young people from marrying; so Emilia and young Mr. Leonard became man and wife.

Charlotte's letters tell of her love for Mr. Edmondsbury. At first she refused this young man because the two fathers had planned

the match, but later the elder Mr. Edmondsbury changed his mind and wanted his son to marry another woman. As the son loved only Charlotte he refused to follow his father's plans. This led to a break between father and son. Just as the boy was starting for Jamaica, and at the wish of Charlotte, Mr. Arlington went to the young man and asked him to become a member of that family. After the wedding, of course, peace was made with the young husband's father.

Thus, the two young ladies, always close friends, found happiness through filial duty and their respective marriages.

The Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné

D'Aubigné's life was lived while the Huguenots were making every effort to maintain a foot hold in France. As a small lad, he witnessed a group of Huguenots being maltreated and promised his father that he would do all in his power, later, to see the faith established. With a strong mind and a thorough education, d'Aubigné plunged into a religious cause at an early age. His life story then becomes synonymous with a phase of French history. He escaped the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, took part in many battles, performed all manner of daring deeds, and finally became a member of the party of the King of Navarre. Popularity at court led to jealousies, but above all else, d'Aubigné could always be counted on to do what was right. Never once did he let pass a chance to do a good deed, and indeed, it is in this phase of his life that Mrs. Scott took greatest delight.

Marriage was entered into in 1582, but d'Aubigné continued in his active labors in the Huguenot cause. In 1605, things were not going at all well; so d'Aubigné made plans to leave France. This resulted in a call to court where he continued work for the next fifteen years. In 1620, he went to Switzerland and was received at Geneva and Berne with great honor. Warrants were sworn out against him in France, but they could not be served. He continued active up to the end of his life in 1630.

Time and Place of Composition

Lack of reference to her writing, in the extant correspondence, makes it impossible for one to check on Mrs. Scott's whereabout during the time of the actual composition of her various works.[12] There is, however, a certain degree of faith which can be placed in her residence at certain places at approximately the times of composition. Upon this faith, such as it is, rest the following conclusions.

Correspondence reveals a trip to Bath in December of 1747, made by Mrs. Montagu and her sister Sarah Robinson. Later Mrs. Montagu departed, but Miss Robinson remained behind with friends. Among these friends was Lady Barbara Montagu, and with this lady, Miss Robinson resided, in Bath, for several years. Indeed, the next notice of her appearance away from Bath is late in 1750. In this case, *The History of Cornelia,* published in 1750, would have been written in the city of Bath. Conditions surrounding the young author's life were probably very bright at this time, for, as seen in the letters, there were plenty of friends and enough amusement to keep one busy.

By April of 1752, the marriage to and separation from George Lewis Scott had occurred. Shortly after the separation, Mrs. Scott was again in Bath with Lady Bab, where she remained until July of 1754. Two works were published in 1754. It is a fair supposition that they were composed chiefly at Bath. One can readily imagine the lady passing her hours in writing these two stories, in her efforts to forget, or get away from the unhappy marriage. Letters show that less time was given to society and more to writing, reading, and other work between 1752 and 1754.

The next book, *The History of Gustavus Ericson,* did not appear until a period of seven years had elapsed following the two novels of 1754. During the seven years, the major part of the time was spent between Bath and Bath Easton. During the winter months, Bath was the residence, and during the summer, Bath Easton. As Mrs. Scott was a woman of the strictest moral and religious principles, the life of a man like Gustavus Ericson would

[12] Only one slight mention of writing has been found in the letters. In telling Mrs. Montagu of her spare time occupations in 1756, Mrs. Scott said, "When I am not writing, I read. . . . "

very naturally appeal to her. Also, with three attempts at novel writing behind her, none of them overly successful, it is no great surprise to find her attempting a new form of writing, Viz., historical biography. It was written in all probability at Bath and Bath Easton. This period of seven years found the two women diligently at work on their pet scheme of charity. The writing of such a biography was doubtless a splendid and not unnatural relief from the strain of the physical work, and not inconsistent with it.

The year 1762 saw two more works, *The History of Mecklenburgh* and *Millenium Hall*. The first was the result of an occasion. As seen in Mrs. Scott's letter to her sister-in-law,[13] she was deeply interested in the situation—the marriage of the king. Whether the research for this historical account could have been accomplished in Bath is a question, though in all probability the facilities were good. Also, it is to be noted that no record is to be found showing a trip to London in late 1761 or early 1762, during which time she would have been compiling the material.

Millenium Hall has generally been supposed to be the work of Mrs. Scott and Lady Barbara in collaboration, though too much emphasis need not be placed on the work of the latter. The only authority for Lady Bab's part in the novel seems to be that of Horace Walpole.[14] Sir Egerton Brydges makes no mention of collaboration. If Lady Bab did assist in the writing of this story, one possible explanation which presents itself is that Mrs. Scott was probably working on *Millenium Hall* when George III announced his plans concerning the Princess of Mecklenburgh. In the excitement of collecting historical data the novel could have been turned over to Lady Bab, but surely, it is Mrs. Scott—the author of five other works of fiction—whose style is distinct in the story. The two ladies, of course, were still living a part of each year in Bath and the remainder in Bath Easton. The charitable work was at the peak of its development and no doubt the two ladies looked upon the literary effort as being of special worth both as a record (though idealized) of their work and as a means of teaching the "love of virtue."

There is no account of where Mrs. Scott resided between the

[13] Doran, *A Lady of Last Century*, p. 94.
[14] See above, p. 42.

date of Lady Bab's death in 1765 and the publication of the *History of Sir George Ellison* in 1766. Since Lady Bab died in August of 1765 and the novel appeared prior to July of 1766, it is quite possible that the book was complete, or practically so, before death broke up the friendship. It seems quite probable that this work was in mind as early as the Millenium Hall story because Mr. Ellison was the supposed author of the account of the ladies. Of course, it is possible that Mrs. Scott could have written this last book as a relief from the suffering which she must have felt over the loss of her companion. If written before the death of Lady Bab, then *The History of Sir George Ellison* would be another of the products of the houses at Bath and Bath Easton, though, if written after August, 1765, there is no telling what the scene of composition was.

Again from November 1770 to June 1774 no records of Mrs. Scott's place of residence have been located. The first part of this period, however, must have been a busy one, for the year 1772 saw the novel *The Test of Filial Duty* and the historical biography, *The Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné* come from the press. Lack of facts make even a guess as to the location of the place of composition of these two works unwise.

As late as 1778, Mrs. Scott's works were still known to a degree, for the fourth edition of *Millenium Hall* bears that date. After the two works of 1772, however, the only writing which can be attributed to Mrs. Scott is the few letters which remain. The last seventeen years of her life witnessed her works fall into oblivion as she herself drifted about, seemingly just waiting her turn with death.

In all probability Mrs. Scott's residences had little or no bearing on her literary efforts for these rather express her mind as her life was directed, though living with Lady Bab and being active in charity doubtless gave added strength to that phase of the work.

Contemporary and Later Critical Notices

There are surprisingly few critical notices of any sort touching upon the writings of Mrs. Scott. It is true that each of her nine publications were noticed in the *Monthly Review,* a few of them receiving commendation of the highest type, but accounts of the works, found in other places, such as letters and diaries of the time,

are indeed scarce. Had the author been willing to acknowledge her works definitely and openly, it is likely that the London group of critics would have seized upon them—probably praising them as work of exceptional quality because of Mrs. Montagu.

The *Monthly Review* published an article on *This History of Cornelia* in May, 1750.[15] The review says, in part, "The author of Cornelia has distinguished his attempt to gratify the taste of mankind for works of the imagination, from most authors, by the graver turn of his performances. In this, as well as in several of the incidents he affects an imitation of *Marianne;* but has unfortunatley carried his seriousness too far. For the history of Marianne, tho' grave, is not stiff; and tho' serious, not formal, but an agreeable vein of freedom and good humour runs through the whole, and sets it at an equal distance from what is loose and trifling on the one hand, and dull and pedantic on the other." Leaving the composition with this, the review proceeds to give a lengthy summary of the story itself. The author is thus given some praise as a promising writer. Though no popularity seems to have been the share of this work, it was known sufficiently well to be named in George Colman's long list of objectionable romances to be found on the shelves of the circulating libraries of the eighteenth century.[16]

In February of 1754, the *Monthly Review* contained an account of the second of Mrs. Scott's novels, *Agreeable Ugliness*.[17] "It should be our first business to give the meaning of so singular, and, according to the nature of the thing, so inconsistent a title-page, did not the subsequent account of the work itself sufficiently explain it. The design the author seems principally to have had in view, is to enforce the benefits of a good education; and to shew, that their value is so far from being inferior, that it infinitely transcends those of the most exquisite charms (short synopsis given). . . . We must not dismiss this article without observing, that tho' many of the characters are interesting, yet few of them are finished; that the narrative is sometimes obscure and languid, and the stile often inaccurate." No further notice seems to have been given the work.

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[15] *Monthly Review* 3:59. May, 1750.

[16] See the Introduction to *Polly Honeycombe.*

[17] 10:144, February, 1754.

The next month—March, 1754—found an article on *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life* in this same critical magazine.[18] And, again, the praise of the novel is luke-warm. "Though we have not received as favorable an idea of this performance as the editor (who declares he had no share in composing this excellent piece, which in his opinion exceeds anything of the kind that has been published for many years), yet we cannot but look upon it as superior to many of our late publications in this way. Its plan seems to have been formed upon that of the *Arabian Night's entertainment, the Chinese Tales,* etc. . . ." The review then concludes with the observations that the tales "Do not abound with many very affecting incidents, nor is the diction to be commended. Nevertheless, the strictest regard appears to have been paid to decency; and there is evidently a moral tendency through the whole, which may, with some, compensate for its imperfections." This work, like *The History of Cornelia* is in the list of romances found in *Polly Honeycombe,* thus showing a certain degree of familiarity with it on the part of the public.

Mrs. Scott's first historical work was more fortunate than her three novels. It was given some thirteen pages in the *Monthly Review,*[19] from which, the following quotation shows that the piece was looked upon as worth-while. The history, "if not elegant and correct, is nevertheless animated and entertaining. His (Raymond's) remarks, indeed, are, in some places, trite and superfluous: his expression likewise is sometimes obscure, and too often redundant. But, the peculiar strength and vivacity, both of style and sentiment, which enlivens the whole, and which is so happily adapted to such an active and interesting subject, will be found and most amply to compensate for a few venial inaccuracies; and where a work in general deserves commendation, to be industrious in exposing particular blemishes, betrays rather the disposition of a malevolent caviler, than of a candid critic." One is tempted to believe that the name, Henry Augustus Raymond, Esq., had something to do with this pleasant acceptance of the historical account. Three novels had been published anonymously, but here is a work signed by the author. Surely the reviewer had no suspicion that Mrs. Scott was or even could have

[18] *Monthly Review* 10:237, March, 1754.
[19] 24:54-67, January, 1761.

been the author. Even Sir Egerton Brydges did not at first associate *The History of Gustavus Ericson* with Mrs. Scott, for the title is omitted from his list of her works as he published it in 1805. It is added, however, in his second volume,[20] with the following comments. "I enclose you an account of a publication of the late Mrs. Scott, whose other works are noticed in the *Censura Literaria. The History of Gustavus Ericson,* in point of composition, is fully equal to *The Life of D'Aubigné.*" There is a memorandum attached to the article which begins, "The name of Henry Augustus Raymond, annexed to the title of *The History of Gustavus Ericson,* is fictitious, the real author being Mrs. Sarah Scott." This information touching upon Henry Augustus Raymond was taken from the fly leaf of a copy of the biography "in the library of T. B. Esq., of N.—"[21]

The History of Mecklenburgh was reviewed in the *Monthly Review* for June of 1762.[22] It is possible that even the author of this review was caught in the spell of the occasion. He says, "The author has treated the History of this branch of the Germanic Empire from the earliest accounts. The style is easy, and the materials appear to be faithfully collected from Authors of credit. Bushing, who is no where referred to in this collection, appears to be the best authority for accounts of any part of Germany." This is higher praise than the book would have received a year or so later despite the fact that it was dedicated to the Queen, and that it went into a second edition before the end of the year (1762).

The review of *The History of Gustavus Ericson* is in the spirit of high praise, but the article on *Millenium Hall,* published in the *Monthly Review* for November, 1762,[23] adds a sort of personal testimony regarding the pleasure derived from the mere reading of the work. "*Millenium Hall* is the name given to the rural and elegant abode of a happy society of ladies, which the Author tells us he met with in the West of England." There follows a short synopsis of the book, and then, "These are the outlines of a work well calculated,

[20] *Censura Literaria* II, 177-78, Article XXI.

[21] "T. B. Esq., of N." has eluded search, but there seems little doubt as to the truth of the note made in his copy regarding the authorship. See: Montagu, M., *Letters of Mrs. E. Montagu,* III, 190n.

[22] *Monthly Review,* 26:475, June, 1762.

[23] *Monthly Review,* 27:389, November, 1762.

as the title justly professes, to inspire the Reader with proper sentiments of humanity, and the love of virtue. We have perused it with pleasure; and heartily recommend it, as a very entertaining as well as truly moral and sensible performance." Horace Walpole's copy of the second edition, 1764, gives the first evidence of the authorship of this work, but the notation tells nothing of the book in the way of criticism. In all probability everyone knew of Mrs. Scott's connection with the novel by 1764, though she made no public acknowledgment. It was certainly her best known book. The *Gentleman's Magazine*[24] mentions *Millenium Hall* as the work of Mrs. Scott, who was "author of a variety of ingenious publications," but adds that the title would "be recognized by persons much conversant with modern literature." This infers that the casual reader would probably not know the work, but that persons in book circles would surely recall it. No writer who has mentioned the works of Mrs. Scott has failed to call attention to this novel—*Millenium Hall.* Then, the very fact that it went through a fourth edition is evidence of some power to interest, or to evoke esteem.

A long synopsis of the novel, *The History of Sir George Ellison,* is to be found in the *Monthly Review* for July, 1766,[25] but without comment as to the quality of the work, its style, diction, characters. The shorter form of this story, *The Man of Real Sensibility,* is first noted by the *Dictionary of National Biography,* and no critical notice of any sort has come to light.

Mrs. Scott's only attempt at a novel in the typically Richardsonian epistolary form—*The Test of Filial Duty*—was published in 1772. The *Monthly Review* carried an article[26] in its February issue which would tend rather to keep people from taking time to read the work than encourage them to do so. It says, "The excellent lessons of morality, which this work inculcates will not be able to save it from oblivion." W. L. Courtney, in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* merely remarks, as if taking his impression from the review, "good morality, but dull reading." The work is, as I have noted, exceedingly difficult to find today.

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[24] *Gent. Magazine,* 1798, ii, 862.
[25] *Monthly Review,* 35:43-6, July, 1766.
[26] *Monthly Review,* 46:165, February, 1772.

The last of Mrs. Scott's works, *The History of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné,* was reviewed in the *Monthly Review* for October, 1772.[27] It says, in part, "The present life of this celebrated hero of the Huguenots appears to be written with judgment and impartiality; and it is, we believe, the most complete account of the honest, brave, and learned D'Aubigné, that hath yet been laid before the public. He was grand-father to the celebrated Madame Maintenon." Another early account of the work is that of Sir Egerton Brydges,[28] in which he says, "Mrs. Scott obtained a just reputation for this life. It is compiled not only from D'Aubigné's own private account, but from the principal historians and memoir-writers of that age; and it is characterized not only by research and knowledge, but by a perspicuous narrative, by a lucid selection and arrangement of materials; by a force of sentiment, and vigor of language." This appreciative comment showed only one side of the public opinion. There were at least a few who were unwilling to be even generous, as is seen in a letter of May, 1772, written to the Reverend William Mason, by Horace Walpole.[29] This letter shows, incidentally, that Mrs. Scott's authorship of the work was generally known, even though it was published anonymously. The letter reads, in part, "Mrs. Scott, sister of Mrs. Montagu, has written a life of Agrippa D'Aubigné—no—she has not written it, she has extracted it from his own account, and no dentist at a fair could draw a tooth with less grace. It is only in a religious sense that she has made it a good book, for it seems she is very pious." Walpole's acid tongue was allowed for in 1772, and such comments as these would probably do little harm to the circulation of the work. The *Gentleman's Magazine,* in the article referred to above, made note of this volume, as did Brydges in his first volume of the *Censura Literaria,* Matthew Montagu in his edition of his aunt's letters, etc. The book was seemingly well known and quite popular for a number of years.

From these criticisms, it would seem that the span in excellence of craftsmanship in style and story between *Millenium Hall,* which is highly praised, and *The Test of Filial Duty,* which is condemned

[27] *Monthly Review,* 47:325, October, 1772.
[28] *Censura Literaria* I, 293.
[29] *Letters of Horace Walpole* edited by Mrs. Paget Toynbee.

to oblivion, ought to be exceedingly great. As a matter of fact the latter is as easily read as the former to-day. It is, indeed, difficult to think of any one of the nine books as being superior in any marked degree to another. One may feel that the historical biographies are done in a scholarly way, that *Millenium Hall* has the deepest seriousness as a result of its author's personal relation with its subject, that *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life* has more of normal everyday life in it, and that, from a structural standpoint, Cornelia's "history" is the best of the group. But such differences are too insignificant to allow great distinctions to be made. The same moral and religious sense pervades each work, and once the style of the author is seen, it is hardly possible for one to be able to doubt Sir Egerton Brydges' list attributing them to the same author—Mrs. Sarah Scott.

CHAPTER III

RE-EVALUATION OF MRS. SCOTT'S WRITINGS

Qualifications for Writing

From the facts which have been set forth concerning Mrs. Scott's character, the nature of her literary productions, and the reception accorded these by her contemporaries, it is now possible to assign her to her proper rank amongst the makers of English literature, and to apportion to her memory what meed of praise may be due her for her contribution to its development. It is true that she was not a great writer, as is best seen in the fact that her works were forgotten within a few decades after publication, nor was there any marked quality of originality in her writings, but she was admirably qualified for the type of subjects which she used. Her native love for learning was encouraged especially by Dr. Conyers Middleton, under whose guidance she doubtless came to a proper appreciation of the classics. It is an established fact that Elizabeth Robinson gained her first knowledge of the ancients in the Middleton home at Cambridge, and the younger sister must have had access to the same source. This was, however, only one phase of interest. She was familiar with the "polite" literature of her own time, as is seen from her correspondence, in which she often uses images remembered from reading to describe contemporary experiences. In a letter of February 1739-40, she applies a couplet from Pope of "a youth more glittering than a birth-night Beau, who even in slumber made your cheek to glow," [1] to her sister, Elizabeth, who was one of the popular belles of the London social whirl.

Poetry was one of her favorite forms of literature, it would seem, for the letters show familiarity with the works of Spenser, Sidney, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Dr. Young, etc. Speaking of a young poet by the name of Brion, she writes that he is "a mad

[1] "Rape of the Lock." Canto I, 23-24.

poet who perhaps you have never seen, who has a title to some property on Parnasus having none any where else, and who, if he is not inspired by Apollo is at least influenced by his Sister Luna, and thus must be allow'd to be in some measure allied to the Poetish." Sidney's *Arcadia* is used to assist in telling of Miss Molly Brockman, a young lady who lived near Mount Morris. She would never make a "comely shepherdess" said Mrs. Scott. In another letter, telling of a ball to which Jenny, her waiting maid, had gone, one reads, "she perceived no difference between herself and Cleopatra laying on her couch in Dryden's description of her. . . ."

The same letter referring to Jenny, shows a knowledge of a popular foreign novel. "She show'd all the vanity and innocence of Marianne, and her mind was then so exactly like Marianne's upon her first appearance that one wou'd have thought Mrs.[2] Marivaux had taken her for a model."

One can imagine that Mrs. Scott usually kept a book at hand on all occasions. When going for a walk, she often had a book as her companion. On one such walk, a rain storm came up while she was reading. "The other day after standing long with my back against a tree which afforded me shelter, I found myself in full as melancholy tho' more cleanly situation than Robin Hood. . . ." She knew the old ballads then, along with other types of writing.

After the separation from Mr. Scott in 1752, there appears in one of her letters to Mrs. Montagu, a list of books which she had been reading, some not yet finished. "My reading does not seem to correspond very well; since I came down I read the history of Florence and Lord Bacon's Essays, and the Old Plays,[3] Christianity not founded on argument,[4] Randolph's answer to it, some of Mr. Harris on Art and happiness, and some of David Simple's Life, and Fontanus' Tales; and am now reading an account of the Government of Venice, Montaigne's Essays and some more of Fontanus' Tales." Of equal interest is the mention of books in letters from Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. Scott. Mrs. Montagu wrote on May 4, 1756,[5] "You

[2] Manuscript so transcribed. Query: abbreviation of Monsieur (Ms. or Mns.)?

[3] *Selected Collection of Old Plays*, Ed. Dodsley, R. 12 vols., 1744.

[4] By H. Dodwell, to which Thomas Randolph replied. See: *Dictionary of National Biography* account of Randolph, Thomas.

[5] Montagu, M. *Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu,* IV, 14.

tell me I shou'd always mention any new book worth reading; there is lately published an Essay on the Genius and Writing of Mr. Pope[6] which I think one of the best pieces of criticism I ever read." Another letter asks the return of Voltaire's *Le Roman Historique,* "as soon as you and Lady Bab have done with it;" and the same letter adds, "I hope Mr. G. Montagu has sent Lady Bab Mr. Walpole's account of the Noble and Royal Authors of England, it is a work of great wit."[7] Walpole and George Montagu were particularly good friends, and the latter was seemingly very found of his Aunt, Lady Barbara Montagu. Still another of Mrs. Montagu's notes says, "I am in possession of Madame de Maintenon's Memoirs and Letters, there are six volumes of the first and nine of the second. . . . I think the Memoirs will entertain you." [8] Then in the first months of 1757, Mrs. Montagu wrote, "By this day's carrier set forth the works of Voltaire, the Grand Cyrus, and the History of Genghiscan. You will be pleased to read the almost unknown story of the conqueror of a third part of the habitable world. There are many heroic actions there recorded, of which fame has hardly taken any cognizance." [9]

Like all well educated people of this time, Mrs. Scott knew the works of Shakespeare. The first references to the great dramatist are in the letters of about 1742. It is quite possible that while on the wedding trip with Mr. and Mrs. Montagu, she had seen certain of the plays in London.[10] At this time the Elizabethan plays were experiencing great popularity. Garrick's interpretations of Shakespearian roles were the theatrical sensation of the town, and his performances, more than ever, focussed attention on Shakespeare. At any rate, after the wedding trip, there are more and more instances in her letters, of illustrations drawn from the Shakespearian plays. A letter from Bath (1743), tells of a woman who had been angling for two men, in the hopes of catching one of them for a husband. Love was not a part of the game so far as the lady was concerned.

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[6] Warton, Joseph. *Essay on Pope,* 1756.

[7] Montagu, M. *Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu,* IV, 16.

[8] Ibid, IV, 31. It is quite likely that Mrs. Scott's interest in D'Aubigné was started by the reading of the Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon. D'Aubigné was the Maintenon's grandfather.

[9] Ibid, IV, 42.

[10] Garrick made his famous appearance as Richard III on October 19, 1741.

Mrs. Scott related the story to her sister with the assistance of Shakespeare. She "has none of the symptoms of a Lover according to Rosalind's description." Then, in a letter of about 1745, there is another reference to the same play. Speaking of the love of a Miss Corbett and Sir William Hardres, she says, "They put me in mind of the Clown's verses in As You Like It, 'Come away, come away, Audrey, for if we don't marry we must live in Bawdry,' for it is just their case." [11]

It will be noted that the books listed in Mrs. Scott's letters are, for the most part, serious works. It would seem that she cared very little for the lighter types of romances and novels.

In keeping with Mrs. Scott's love for reading, which gave background for her literary works, she had an aversion to large groups of people, to card games, and to the shallow life led by society folk in general. As early as 1743, when the young lady was only twenty years of age, she wrote a letter from Bath to Mrs. Montagu, showing this attitude. "At six am engaged in the rooms to a party at cards with Miss Leonora Bathurst, the youngest Miss Nash, two of the prettiest men in the place and a proper quantity of others to make up the set; I have play'd but five times at cards since I have been here, in which I think I am lucky." The aversion was slight in 1743, but it grew gradually, assuming a clear-cut form in a letter of 1750. In writing in the latter year, to a friend, Mrs. Scott says, "I find no objection to large companies, except the want of society in them. . . . I have not the natural requirement for society—the love of cards. . . . I am glad, by the bye, there are such things as cards in the world; for otherwise one would be teased by eternal conversation parties, which are terrible things." [12] The next appearance of this spirit of revolt against the frivolous nature of society is in a letter of 1754 addressed to Mrs. Montagu. It shows Mrs. Scott's feelings toward the social gatherings of the city and the quiet of the country. "I cou'd have more satisfaction in your company," she writes, "than in London where all people are so cumber'd about many

[11] In Genest, John, *Some Account of the English Stage,* 1832, vol. 5, "As You Like It" is listed as being performed at twelve separate times between October, 1741, and November, 1747. This sustained popularity may be reflected in Mrs. Scott's allusions.

[12] Doran, pp. 266-67.

matters that there is scarce time to enjoy any perfectly." That the ideas regarding groups of people remained with Mrs. Scott through the years is shown by a passage from *Millenium Hall* (1762): "Do you then mistake a crowd for society? I know not two things more opposite. How little society is there to be found in what you call the world? It might more properly be compared to that state of war, which Hobbes supposes the first condition of mankind. The same vanities, the same passions, the same ambitions reign in almost every breast; a constant desire to supplant, and a continual fear of being supplanted, keep the minds of those who have any views at all in a state of unremitted tumult and envy. . . . What I understand by society is a state of mutual confidence, reciprocal services, and correspondent affections; where members are thus united, there will be a free communication of sentiment, and we shall then find speech, that peculiar blessing given to man, a valuable gift indeed; but when we see it restrained by suspicion, or contaminated by detraction, we rather wonder that so dangerous a power was trusted with a race of beings, who seldom make a proper use of it.

"You will pity us perhaps because we have no cards, no assemblies, no plays, no masquerades, in this solitary place. The first we might have if we chose it, nor are they totally disclaimed by us; but while we can with safety speak our own thoughts, and with pleasure read those of wiser persons, we are not likely to be often reduced to them. We wish not for large assemblies because we do not desire to drown conversation in noise; the amusing fictions of dramatic writers are not necessary where nature affords so many real delights; and as we are not afraid of showing our hearts, we have no occasion to conceal our persons, in order to obtain either liberty of speech or action." Surely one can see the real Mrs. Scott, author of certain literary works, in this passage. Life was real, life was earnest to her. Humor had no place in it, but the quiet of the country fostered those sentimental musings which gave life deeper meaning.

In point of time, Mrs. Scott's position in this history of the novel is conspicuous because of the fact that her first work, *The History of Cornelia,* was published in 1750, just ten years after *Pamela,* and that only the name of Sarah Fielding, of the female novelists, stands earlier, omitting, of course, the Duchess of New-

castle, Aphra Behn, Mrs. Manley, and perhaps Mrs. Heywood, because of the different nature of their early works. Sarah Fielding's novel, *David Simple,* was published in 1744, and she saw two more works through the press before 1750,[13] which places *The History of Cornelia* very early in the list of genuine novels written by women. Of the male writers in this field, only Fielding and Smollett had produced works following the first by Richardson, before Mrs. Scott appeared in the ranks. Then, considering the ideals of the eighteenth century, Mrs. Scott deserves credit for certain daring scenes in her novels. For instance, in two cases, the ladies dress as men and perform the duties of the male in the way of supporting others, and in *Millenium Hall* a group of ladies is represented as withdrawing from the world in order to lead fuller and richer lives in charitable works among the poor. It was in the development of her ideals of charity that Mrs. Scott came nearest building for herself a separate niche in the history of the novel. She and Lady Bab looked upon charity as an escape from the worthless sort of life led by many of their acquaintances at Bath and elsewhere. It was no simple affair, but rather a specialized labor to which they devoted themselves. The undertaking at Bath Easton was among the first of such projects though there are accounts of similar enterprises later.[14] Then, first in *Millenium Hall,* and second in *The History of Sir George Ellison,* Mrs. Scott expressed the full theory of her scheme of work, the dream upon which the successful experiment was founded. The other novels by Mrs. Scott contain this same element, usually in the final culmination of the plot. As soon as the hero and heroine are made man and wife and get settled in their own home, they at once look about to see what good can be done in the way of making their community more cheerful. No neighborhood failed to respond happily to such a spirit, and it would seem that Mrs. Scott really believed her system of charity had in it the power to create almost a Utopian condition.

Mrs. Scott's place in the development of the novel is interesting

[13] *Familiar Letters between the Characters of David Simple and others* (1747), and *The Governess* (1749).

[14] Hannah More spent a number of years near Cheddar, working with the poor. One glimpse of the work done is interesting—a girl who was educated there received, at the time of her marriage, five shillings, a pair of white stockings, and a new Bible. See: Whitmore, *Women's Work in Fiction,* pp. 65-66.

on at least one other count. She came close to two influences which were to play a large part in the following years. In one instance she curiously suggests the Gothic Romance. In one of Cornelia's trials, she is kidnapped and carried to a secluded castle by Mr. de Rheés. The place is many miles removed from civilization and the castle partially in ruins. The setting is complete for a story filled with such thrills as are found in Walpole's *Castle of Otranto,* or better still in the more advanced form found in Ann Radcliffe's intricately woven tales of horror. Mrs. Scott, however, did not begin to realize what forces were actually in her hands, for the scene is allowed to pass after a few weak attempts at excitement. No touch of the supernatural is even suggested, but aside from this, the gold was in her grasp, though in some way she allowed it to slip by unnoticed. It is hardly conceivable that Walpole or his followers could have taken the Gothic idea from Mrs. Scott, but it is none the less interesting that she should have made even this slight use of what later became a strong force in fiction. The second influence which was to see a rich development was that of the use of rural nature as an embellishment to the stories. Though failing like others in her day to appreciate the worth of outdoor nature as an aid to plot development, Mrs. Scott has given several fascinating glimpses of rural life, in her novels. One such passage is found in *The History of Cornelia.* The heroine has escaped from Mr. de Rheés and takes lodging in the house of a farmer. In the description of the place, one reads, "What would have rendered it agreeable to any one was the wood near which it stood. Thro' this wood ran a clear murmuring rivulet, which, with the great variety of birds, that seemed, like her, to take refuge there from their persecutors, made a most delightful harmony, most of all pleasing to persons, possessed with a tender passion, who naturally love the soothing murmurs of a rivulet gentle as their souls, and the music of the birds, who seem to spend their lives in love." The feeling for nature here is generalized and used merely as a background. Any wood could answer the purpose, but it is a step toward the better treatment of similar material in *Millenium Hall.* Two gentlemen, riding along the country side, are stopped by an accident. They walk toward a house and as they go, speak of the beauty of the situation. The fields, the animals, the trees, and the house are

made to fit definitely into a most pleasing landscape, and as the picture is unfolded in the story, one gets a sense of genuine beauty. There were "hedges of rosetrees and sweet bryars, so artfully planted. that they made a thick hedge, while at the lower part, pinks, jonquils, hyacinths, and various other flowers, seemed to grow under their (the hedges') protection. Primroses, violets, lilies of the valley, and polyanthuses enriched such shady spots, as, for want of sun, were not well calculated for the production of other flowers." All this, says one of the gentlemen, "filled us with reflections on the infinite variety of nature." Then, the author makes a personal observation which says, "If Nebuchadnezzar had such pastures as these to range in, his seven years expulsion from human society might not be the least agreeable part of his life." Further on in the story, another delightful scene is sketched. "Without perceiving we were entering a building, so well is the outside of it concealed by trees, we found ourselves in a most beautiful grotto, made of fossils, spars, coral, and such shells, as are at once both fine and rustic; all of the glaring, tawdry kind are excluded, and by the gloom and simplicity preserved, one would imagine it the habitation of some devout anchorite. Ivy and moss in some places cover, while they seem to unite, the several materials of the variegated walls. The rivulet which runs through the wood, falls down one side of the grotto with great rapidity, broken into various streams by the spar and coral, and passing through, forms a fine cascade just at the foot of the grotto, from whence it flows into the river."

As a matter of fact, these are trifling instances and of little force in refuting Miss Whitmore's statement that Charlotte Smith was the first woman writer to take advantage of scenes from nature, making them serve a worthy purpose in fiction.[15] The impressions suggested by such passages in Mrs. Scott's works are not developed. With the unsurpassed beauties of nature in the Welsh highlands at her command in *The Test of Filial Duty,* Emilia Leonard is made to write in just a few words of the waterfalls, mountain ridges and forests. Then, in *Sir George Ellison,* nothing is made of the country scenes, and of the boat trip from Jamaica to England, one learns only that Mr. Ellison set sail and that he landed in his old home country

[15] Whitmore, *Women's Work in English Fiction.*

in due course of time. Later writers would hardly have neglected the opportunity to expatiate on wind and weather, sunset and storm.

When Mrs. Scott's letters are recalled, it is surprising to see how slight a use is made in her novels of the out-of-doors. The manuscript letters used in this study contain numerous references to the delight derived from long walks in the country. "I began a long walk this morning at seven o'clock," she writes, "cut a walk in a wood which was in my way, and walk'd along the side of the little River till I was as wet as if I had been in it. I came home about nine o'clock under a necessity of new dressing myself to avoid catching cold; this may seem rather troublesome but Mrs. Pocock had told me of this walk and it ran much in my head, so the pleasure of satisfying my curiosity made me, like a true woman, forget all the inconvenience that might attend it."

Still more interesting to her than early morning walks were little strolls in the evening. "On Thursday night I was walking," she writes, and then again, "Last night I walked for two hours with William for my guard on the Commons about here (Bath) and did not go to the Rooms, to my great satisfaction." From Kent, she wrote to Mrs. Montagu, on July 7, 1746, "Air, exercise and rain agree with me much. . . . I have been abroad in several very violent showers since I came here, but there are many impenetrable trees under which I have found shelter so effectually that I have never had a dozen drops of rain upon me tho' I have heard rushing torrents and descending rains all round me. I have been in situations that wou'd have pleased Dr. Young, he might have compar'd himself to old father Dencohon with some vraisemblance." Another passage speaks of flowers. "I air'd myself upon the gravel to the great entertainment of my nose, for I never smelt anything so sweet as the flowers were after so very hot a day and a gentle shower." A keen delight in nature is shown in these passages from the letters, and the few from the novels, though development in a literary sense is entirely lacking.

The novelists of the eighteenth century were too busy attempting to sketch human nature, to have time for the description of rural scenes. Such glimpses as are given are indefinite—any garden, any clump of trees to shelter a hero or heroine, any house to call a home

—without that detail which might have given the objects a greater vividness. As a matter of fact, Mrs. Scott's natural or personal delight in such matters (a delight which normally would find expression in words) was checked by other conventions of the time, which she also accepted and delighted in. In this case, as in most others, she was doing what her fellows were doing, yet her close proximity to things which were to be more fully developed later is certainly worthy of comment. One can imagine her wandering in the fields or along the river, thinking of all manner of things, but looking upon the thoughts through the eyes of an age which was overladen with sentimentality. Indeed, her love of solitude, appreciation of nature, even her education, all tended to increase sentimentality. With a religious turn of mind, and other qualities such as have been described, she was by every count a follower of the Richardsonian ideals in literature. Only instinctively she brought rural nature and human nature together, with sentimentality making the chief connecting link.

Sentimentality as Seen in the Novels

Richardson had established sentimentality as a sort of standard in fiction with his *Pamela,* and the majority of the eighteenth century novelists followed his lead. In spirit, Mrs. Scott was certainly one of the Richardsonian group. That she knew Richardson's novels from personal reading is shown in her letters. She was among those who read *Pamela* during the first year after publication. It would seem from a letter of early 1742, that she had borrowed the work, for she wrote to Mrs. Montagu that she had had "to write Mrs. Jamison with *Pamela* which we have sent home." Another reference to this novel is found in a letter of July 7, 1746. Along with Lydia Freind she has visited a neighbor, where "Lydia unhappily said she had read six pages in *Pamela* but thought it stupid and cou'd go no farther. Mrs. Godshall said many people did not like it and she was not surprised at that since it (was not written) to promote virtue and religion." This does not speak favorably of the novel, nor does it give the young lady's personal opinion of the work, which would be worth knowing, especially since she was soon to become an author in her own right. Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* is referred to in a letter of 1753-54. "I have finished four volumes of Mr. Charles

Grandison, for the sequel my curiosity must wait. No man, I think knew so well how to cook up a madness; his third volume contains so amiable a madness that was I a man I shou'd go into bedlam, to seek for an object for my love." The portrayal of sentiment in *Pamela* and *Sir Charles Grandison* (as well as other novels) must have appealed to Mrs. Scott's nature. Her own stories are filled with scenes which are equally touching, equally didactic, and probe equally as deep into the hearts of the characters.

To understand Mrs. Scott's quality of sentimentality, one needs to make only a short study of her works, though it is difficult to distinguish between sentiment and the manner of its expression. Both the actual condition and the expression are best illustrated in *The History of Sir George Ellison.* Mr. Ellison has explained his plan of management on the estate in Jamaica to Mr. Hammond, pointing out especially the fact that the slaves were treated "more like children" than as uneducated servants. All this pleased Mr. Hammond so much that he burst forth in a passionate flood of praise of Mr. Ellison. "O Humanity!—Heaven born principle!—true and never ceasing source of bliss—happy they whose hearts are warmed with thy sweet and benign influence! Blessed with the divine principle of thee, we forget ourselves and seek our dearest joys in bestowing happiness on others. . . . " The passage becomes almost absurd in its sentimental exuberance, but Mrs. Scott evidently believed that she was doing no more than justice to a man whose heart was properly filled with the love of his fellows. Mr. Ellison, hearing the words of his guest, knew at once that he had found the man to whose hands he could safely intrust his estate, for above all things, the slaves were the greatest cause for worry. Days had been spent in search of a man who would be willing to handle the slaves with that degree of kindness which Mr. Ellison felt was their due. His attitude seems to be sentiment arising from a genuine heart, but Mr. Hammond's eulogy is a sort of verbal style only. In Mrs. Scott's other works this same distinction cannot be clearly drawn. The young heroine of *The History of Cornelia* is seemingly on her death bed. Bernardo, who is her only companion, feeling that his last chance to tell her of his love is at hand, bursts forth in such sentimental fervor that it seems almost a parody rather than a serious disclosure of love. In this same

novel, Julia is excessively sentimental in her love for Mr. de Rhone. Leonora, in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* oversteps the bounds of female propriety in her scheme to win the love of the young man of her choice. The young St. Furcy's love for Mrs. Dorigny (*Agreeable Ugliness*) is so sentimental that a twentieth century reader is tempted to skip his lines rather than follow his cries of love which are far from masculine. He is so moved at one time, at the possibility of Mrs. Dorigny's marriage to some other man, that he falls ill, and one is led to believe that he could never have recovered had not the lady sent word that if she ever married again it would be to no one but him. This word called forth additional sentiment in the form of a song of praise of Mrs. Dorigny's goodness. The passage is sufficiently sentimental to prove to a sympathetic eighteenth century reader that the young man was thoroughly worthy of the love of the good lady. Only a good man could have experienced the depth of feeling seen in the young St. Furcy. The last of Mrs. Scott's novels, *The Test of Filial Duty,* continues the same sentimentality as the others, but there is a spirit of intimacy which comes through the epistolary form. To hear a sentimental report of a scene from a more or less disinterested person is an entirely different sort of thing from reading a personal letter. The letter is more direct and personal. Thus, the sentimentality of the letters written by the two young ladies does not create the same feeling of weakness as in the other novels.

Mrs. Scott's work must be looked upon as representative of an age which took its greatest delight in those situations which cause the heart to quiver and tears to fall. To picture the innermost feelings of tender hearts was the aim. No attempt is made to deviate from this to anything new. The author had a sort of religious desire to help make the world a better place for living, by sketching sentimental pictures which would move the readers to lead exemplary lives. This was the same spirit which moved Pamela and her sisters throughout the century. It would seem from the general tone of her novels that Mrs. Scott's literary work was done not for the sake of personal praise, but simply that the world might have a few more examples of the proper way to live.

As a slight foil to sentimentality, a few of Mrs. Scott's scenes

are relieved or embellished by touches of humor. Judging from her correspondence, one would expect an abundance of wit and humor in the novels. In the letters, people are caricatured, gossip is enlivened by personal observations, society in general is made a rich source of amusement. It would seem that as a young lady, Mrs. Scott sought out only those companions who could readily uphold one side of a sprightly conversation. In the seriousness of life as seen in the novels, however, the author could not take her eye off the moral. Humor and wit, then, found only a small place though one delightful instance is found in the last story of *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life.* A young lady has run away from home rather than be kept away from the man of her choice. Being unable to locate her lover, she finds it necessary to seek employment, and a place is found as lady's maid. "Being asked her name, after learning that the lady disliked Bible names, Miss Davers replied, 'Wilhelmina.'

" 'Wilhelmina!' repeated Mrs. Colraine; 'Wilhelmina! as I live, very pretty, and quite the air of a name of fashion: There is dignity, there is distinction in it; your Godmothers must certainly have been People of Condition, or they could not have made so elegant a choice. But, let me see, when I am in haste I may not have time, or when I am fatigued or nervous, I may not have spirits to pronounce so many syllables. It will be necessary therefore to make the shortest abbreviation that can possibly be for such exigencies, for except on an emergency I would not drop one Letter of that charming Name. Let me think: *Will,* no, no, that is too like a Fellow, that will not do; let me die if I should not be scandalized; Will, bring me my Shift; Will, put me to Bed; Will, pull off my stockings; Oh! frightful! who would not think it a He creature?'

" 'What does your la'ship think of the next Synabul,' cries *Mincing,* in a Pet at the new Waiting-Maid's superior Elegance of Name: 'Hell, Mem?'

" 'Horrid! shocking Wretch!' screamed out Mrs. Colraine; 'Wouldest thou have my Head run on nothing but Fire and Brimstone? Besides, that word carries with it a thousand ideas that one does not care to think of; it is the unpleasantest subject. What a damp would it cast on a Heart full of gaiety, and a Head full of

Intrigue? As I live, I believe it will blunt the sharpest Invention. Keep out of my thoughts, thou odious Syllable.' "

The question of an abbreviated name was never settled. First, the lady's husband appeared and found the new maid attractive, which displeased his wife, and then the young lover who had not been located earlier, made his appearance. The lover had been searching for the young lady and with the hero and heroine united, Mrs. Scott again became serious in working out the plot. The humorous mood was not allowed to last more than a brief moment.

One other humorous sketch can well be added here, just by way of proving that Mrs. Scott does not entirely lack this quality from her novels. Like the above, this is from one of the stories related by the old Nurse, Sabrina, in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life*. The young man who is the subject of the passage is vain above the ordinary. "He liked his own face in a looking-glass very well, but wisely preferred to it, his present Majesty's Impression on sterling silver, as also those of his Royal Predecessors from the good King his father, up to the two Jacobus's, or either the pious or facetious Carolus. King James' starched Ruff, or Charles' prim beard, when presented on that valuable Metal, were to him more beautiful than any modern Dress or ornament."

Plot Construction and Characterizaton

So far Mrs. Scott's literary works have been surveyed in their general characteristics. It remains now to study the plots and characters more closely for their originality or lack of it and to ask whether her works may not deserve to be better known than is their lot today. Though not so great as the work of a few of her contemporaries, it should also be added that in many respects her work is not inferior. Looking back on her qualifications for writing, and forward to the actual works, it is impossible not to recall Sir Egerton Brydges' words, summing up the general success. He says, "her fancy was not sufficiently powerful to give the highest attention to a novel." [16] This need not be doubted, especially considering its source, but it should not be looked upon as a wholesale condemnation.

[16] *Censura Literaria* I, 293.

In the scheme of Richardson's early novels, there was established a sort of formula for plot and characters, which was used by the majority of novelists for several decades. It was the general rule that the heroine had to be severely tried in a number of ways; the hero had to be unsuccessful in his attempts to win the girl for a period of time sufficiently long to allow for the trials; the forces of evil, though successful at first, had to be properly punished; and a happy conclusion was that which saw the hero and heroine leading useful lives as man and wife. Of course, Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe* is a notable example of an unhappy conclusion, and the novels of Fielding and Smollett do not altogether fit into the formula, but these exceptions make the works of Mrs. Scott and most of the other eighteenth century novelists seem the more definitely of the Richardsonian school. To build up such a plot, a long series of adventures had to be assembled—adventures which would add interest to the reading of the book, and make the final happiness appear thoroughly deserved, and yet stand out in sharp contrast to the forces of evil.

The looseness of plot, which, in spite of some notable examples, seems almost inherent in the novel, is certainly pronounced in Mrs. Scott. Her plots are so loosely constructed that they tend to fall to pieces of their own accord. The only link which runs from first to last is that of the central characters. There are no less than a dozen separate experiences through which Cornelia goes before her story is brought to a close, and in many of these situations, the only direct bearing on the final denouement is the fact that the same young lady is the heroine at all times. For instance, after leaving Bernardo, early in the *History of Cornelia,* the heroine is taken to a house of ill repute, but is saved by a rare bit of good fortune. She then works for a Milliner until Madame du Maine takes her as a sort of secretary-companion. Mr. de Rheés meets her at the du Maine home, and manages to effect a kidnapping. At last, when Bernardo has seemingly been long forgotten, he and Cornelia, the two chief characters, are joined for a brief moment, and again separated. Another series of adventures takes place before the young people are reunited. Even here though, happiness is elusive, for the adventures carry Bernardo to jail and Cornelia to court. At last, by running away,

they are married, but almost immediately the young bride is carried away by kidnappers. This separation was made in error—Cornelia was mistaken for another lady—but it carried the bride and groom to Spain. The book is like a series of short narratives, each one more or less complete in itself, having but slight connection with the others. It would seem that the chief characters had to pass through the various dangers as if to be purged for short comings before gaining happiness. But, the loose structure goes even further. Entirely unrelated material is allowed space in the stories, as for instance, the account which Mr. de Rhone gives of his travels, during which he had performed many good deeds, especially in the way of making it possible for several young men and women to get married. The use or inclusion of such foreign elements was a normal eighteenth century habit, but in addition to the digression, which detracts from the main theme, Mrs. Scott failed even to name the persons befriended by Mr. de Rhone. It is true that the sentimental quality of the young man's nature is shown, but this does not justify the case, or keep the reader from wishing to know either more or less about the suggested stories. In *Agreeable Ugliness,* the young lady who is supposed to be revealing her life, from her diary, seems destined from the early pages to be eventually the wife of the young St. Furcy, but it takes years to work out the plot according to Mrs. Scott's plans. This, of course, is perfectly legitimate, but none the less weak. Though the young people meet and realize their love, the girl marries Mr. Dorigny. They go to Paris, the husband is killed, and then after a lengthy period of mourning and illness, coupled with several other experiences, chiefly proposals of marriage, the lovers succeed in gaining happiness. The sense of plot is somewhat lost in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* and *Millenium Hall,* because of the fact that no single story is told. The first has eight separate stories, with no connection one with the other, and the second is made up of five life histories which are held together by one short account at the beginning. In *The History of Sir George Ellison,* the first third of the story gives the life of the hero in Jamaica. As the story develops later, the only connection between Jamaica and the actual plot is that there the hero made his fortune. This same looseness of structure is seen again in the last novel, *The Test of Filial Duty.* Emilia writes one whole

letter to her friend recounting the life of a family she met en route to Wales. She was charmed with the family because of their well regulated tasks and their particular care of the poor and sick of the community, but there is no other connection with the plot. The letter seems to be an opportunity grasped by the author, out of the movement of the plot, to set forth once again her pet scheme of kindness to all types of people, especially one's neighbors. To the reader who lacks sympathy with the ideal, the letter is merely a space filler, though Mrs. Scott doubtless took great joy in the situation described. It is not at all necessary, of course, for an author to repress every suggestion of side interests from a story, but the usual reader expects a connection of some sort between the scene and the plot. It must, of course, be remembered that this feature of her stories—the inclusion of irrelevant bits of action—which appears as looseness of plot, and is a bit displeasing to modern taste, was justified by current and inherited fashion in the eighteenth century.

The lack of variety in the adventures related in the various novels is an outstanding quality of the Richardsonian school. Mrs. Scott used the same sort of trials as are found in other authors, but going a step further, she duplicated many of her own scenes from one novel to another. She seems to have felt that any good element was worthy of application in any story, and once an interesting or clever device was found, it was used as often as possible. A few of the more common instances of this repetition of scene in Mrs. Scott's books will illustrate the point. The revelation of love through a supposed death-bed recital was popular. Cornelia, in *The History of Cornelia,* was at the point of death. The doctors had said she could not recover. This gave Bernardo the right to tell her of his love, from which, seemingly, the girl gained sufficient will-power to throw off the disease. Later, Mr. de Rhone is thought to be beyond the point of recovery from a fever, which makes Cornelia bold enough to tell him of Julia's passion. He is soon seen on the road to health, and in a very short time there is a happy marriage making Julia and Mr. de Rhone one. This same motive appears twice in *Agreeable Ugliness.* Mrs. Dorigny was near death following the tragic end of her marriage to Mr. Dorigny, and was saved only by the appearance of the young St. Furcy whom she had loved for years. Then,

this young man fell ill of a fever, but was restored to health following word from Mrs. Dorigny that her love for him was unfailing. Equally popular with Mrs. Scott was an unfailing supply of money for the chief characters. Despite the fact that the characters are often in difficult circumstances, they are never allowed to suffer from lack of financial assistance. Miss Mancel was left as a child, without a home and penniless, but she is given money as occasion arises, and then in the end is possessed of a large fortune. This is equally true of Cornelia, Miss Melvyn, the "Shocking Monster" (Mrs. Dorigny), and others.

The first four of Mrs. Scott's works of fiction contain examples, in one way or another, of the troubles caused by evil guardians or step-parents. Cornelia and Miss Mancel each made a narrow escape from their respective guardians; Mrs. Dorigny, Mrs. Morgan, Leonora, and Harriot, suffer as a result of a father's unfortunate second marriage. There is, however, a greater sense of variety than these instances seem to indicate, for in both *The Test of Filial Duty* and *The History of Sir George Ellison,* pleasant home scenes are sketched. And then, the conclusion of each story had to be a vivid example of the happiness of the workers of good deeds and the punishment of the villain. *The History of Cornelia* can be taken as an example of this point. "Bernardo and Cornelia thus passed their lives in the enjoyment of every social happiness, and in the highest public respect and applause. They were honored by all who ever heard of them, and beloved by every one who had a nearer knowledge of them." And still further, they "equally felt the exquisite joy of making all those to whom their power could extend, as happy as their tempers would permit. They were particularly attentive to the education of the great numbers of children they took under their care, and they had the satisfaction of seeing this care rewarded by success. Their neighborhood, in a few years, was stocked with an honest, industrious race, happy in themselves and useful to their country." In like proportion, the persons who were evil in heart and deed had to suffer. "Octavio tried all the ways an ingenious courtier could invent, to reinstate himself in his sovereign's favor. But, meeting with constant disappointments, and finding himself avoided by every one, even those who had paid most court to him during his prosperity,

he found too late, that tho' power may bring flatterers and dependents, merit alone can create friends. These mortifications disgusted him so much with the world, that he retired among the Capucchins. But he soon found that neither his mind, nor conscience were fit for solitude." In *Agreeable Ugliness,* the same ending is found. The "Shocking Monster" and St. Furcy do for their community what Cornelia and Bernardo did for theirs, while the "Fair Villiers" finally despaired of finding happiness and retired to a convent. And in the last novel, Emilia Leonard and Charlotte Arlington become the model young wives after Cornelia's type, and Sophia Leonard led a life of wretchedness because of failing to measure up to the standard.

Of less importance in showing the repetition of scenes, but, none the less interesting, for the daring of the situation if nothing else, is Mrs. Scott's use of the Shakespearian touch of young ladies dressed in male attire. Cornelia disguised herself as a student of law in order to make travel safer, and then in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* Leonora not only dressed as a man, but lived in that garb for a period of time, as she supported herself, her cousin Louisa, and their old Nurse. This young lady is reminiscent of Shakespeare's Rosalind in the fact that she finds difficulty in love because of her disguise, and also in the final happy conclusion. Another incident which is duplicated, is that of a close friendship between the heroine and an elderly lady. Two instances of this can well be noted. The young lady in each case was nameless as far as the world was concerned, yet because of beauty and general attractiveness, was accepted into elegant circles. The heroine of *The History of Cornelia,* afraid to own her name because of her uncle, was given a home by Madame du Maine; and, Miss Mancel, who had never heard her own name, was showered with kindnesses by Lady Lambton.

Turning from plot structure to characterization, we again find Mrs. Scott a representative of her century. Her heroines serve their purpose well despite the fact that it is difficult to study them today with unprejudiced eyes. That is, the present age expects the heroine to be practical, overly sophisticated, independent; but her sentimental sister of Mrs. Scott's day must have been equally alive to that period as a result of her qualities of virtue, meekness, and gentleness. As we apply current rules of individual strength, vitality, and reality to

Mrs. Scott's characters, we may find them disappointing, yet they are closely related to Pamela, Amelia, Narcissa, and other early heroines who are looked upon by most critics as the leading models of their day. It is necessary to seek an eighteenth century view of the characters, at any rate, in order to understand them properly.

Mrs. Scott seems to have had only one mold from which to draw her characters, a mold which is reminiscent of the Richardsonian tradition in that moral fibre is the most conspicuous feature. No young lady could qualify for a leading role in her pages without possessing superior ideals regarding all moral questions. It is to be noted, however, that there is a pleasing sense of diversity in personality as the heroines are viewed from book to book, despite the fact that the same qualities are found in each one. They reveal, by example, how other ladies should conduct themselves under various conditions, and it is in the example that Mrs. Scott was most interested.

The heroine of the first novel, *The History of Cornelia,* can well be looked upon as a sort of common denominator of the female characters. Of Cornelia's early life and personality, one reads in the novel that she "was born of one of the most distinguished families in France. Her parents had been long married without having had a child; they lived in that constant yet varying bliss to be found in the enjoyment of the most delightful affections, and most perfect mutual esteem and confidence." And then still further, "she was now arrived at the age of sixteen, and was endowed with all the charm of youth and beauty, accompanied by the most amiable vivacity. Her situation was in some measure dangerous. For, though the great fund of reason and virtue with which she was blessed, would certainly preserve her from doing anything essentially wrong; yet, the little knowledge she had of the world, might expose her to censure, by making her neglect several things consecrated by customs and prejudices, of which she was ignorant. Her father's whole care had been to cultivate her understanding and virtue; and he had left her as ignorant of the manners of the world, as she was of her own family. There was scarce a good Author among the Greeks, Romans, or Moderns, with whom she was not acquainted; but she knew not her relation to any one, but her uncle, who was almost the only person, besides her father, with whom she had ever conversed, excepting the poor, with

whom the charitableness of her disposition had introduced to her observation." This is definitely a picture of the young lady as seen through her education and home training. Her person was of secondary interest to Mrs. Scott. One realizes that she was beautiful, young, vivacious, but the physical features are pushed into the background in favor of the picture of her mind. Then, to make the impression more vivid, Mrs. Scott sketches the character of Octavio, the vile uncle by way of contrast. Naturally, the superior qualities of the heroine are intensified, the reader's sympathy is aroused and, indeed, the stage is ready for the adventures through which the final reward is to be gained. As the story progresses, one marvels at the equanimity of the young lady. She is ever kind, loving, forgiving, generous.

In general characteristics, the heroines in the various stories of *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* in *Millenium Hall,* and in *The Test of Filial Duty,* are similar to Cornelia. Each one is either well educated or endowed with an unusual fund of common sense, and always above reproach regardless of what trials are in the path. The small details of physical appearance and manner which we usually associate with personality are little developed beyond an assurance that the young lady was beautiful or at least attractive. Even the one seeming exception to this rule, the "Shocking Monster" in *Agreeable Ugliness,* is sketched according to the same plan as Cornelia, though she is just the reverse in outward appearance; her mind is almost a duplicate of the earlier lady's. Because of her careful mental training, the "Shocking Monster" is shown to be in reality a most amiable creature. In contrast, the "Fair Villiers," her older sister, is beautiful in body, but lacks all interest in mental training. The heroine seems more real in the contrast than would have been true otherwise, and inversely, the fair sister seems a bit worse by comparison.

Miss Mancel, charming as a child, becomes a handsome young lady, and then at Millenium Hall is one of the leading spirits in the work. Through her education, gentle nature, and lovable disposition she seems admirably fitted for the sort of work which she undertakes. Of the young ladies in the work, *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* Leonora has sufficient learning to be a teacher in a school for

boys and enough beauty to charm the young man of her choice; Miss Davers is similar to Leonara except that she marries early and the story is told as her life is affected by her husband; Alinda has all the charms of Cornelia; and Harriott, Theodora, and Caroline are of the same tradition. Then, in *The Test of Filial Duty,* the young ladies are drawn with a firm hand but with an eye on hard and plain duty, though the similarity to Cornelia is still clearly seen. Emilia Leonard's beauty is equal to that of her sister, Sophia, but the latter refuses that parental guidance in the form of directed reading and other mental training, in which Emilia becomes well versed. The resultant contrast is sharp and very favorable to Emilia. Charlotte Arlington is pictured as a worthy cousin and friend to Emilia—beautiful and carefully educated.

These pictures are impressionistic rather than definite in detail, but in one instance Mrs. Scott turns from this style of characterization to a direct description of the persons. This one case is self-explanatory. The usual heroine is young and inexperienced, but in *Millenium Hall* the ladies are in middle life. The "Gentleman on his Travels" who is supposedly telling the story, wishes to give his public a personal picture of the unusual group of ladies who were willing to forego the pleasures of society in order to devote their time to their unique charitable project. Because of the nature of the situation it is to be expected that these characters will stand out as genuine individuals, definitely removed from the usual types as seen in the other novels. There are six ladies who make up the governing body at Millenium Hall. Of these, the "Gentleman" gives the following picture. "Mrs. Maynard is between forty and fifty years of age, a little woman, well made, with a lively and genteel air, her black hair, and her eyes of the same color, bright and piercing, her features good and complexion agreeable, though Brown. Her countenance expresses all the vivacity of youth, tempered with a serenity which becomes her age. Mrs. Selvyn can scarcely be called tall, though she approaches that standard. Her features are too irregular to be handsome, but there is a sensibility and delicacy in her countenance which render her extremely engaging; and her person is elegant. Mrs. Mancel, whom we had disturbed from her painting, is tall and finely formed, has great elegance of figure, and is graceful in every motion.

Her hair is a fine brown, her eyes blue, with all that sensible sweetness which is peculiar to that color. In short, she excels in every beauty but the bloom, which is so soon faded, and so impossible to be imitated by the utmost efforts of art, nor has she suffered any further by years than the loss of that radiance, which renders beauty rather more resplendent than more pleasing. Mrs. Trantham, who was carving by her, was the tallest of the company, and in dignity of air particularly excels, but her features and complexion have been so injured by the smallpox, that one can but guess they were once uncommonly fine; a sweetness of countenance, and a very sensible look, indeed, still remain, and have baffled all the most cruel ravages of that distemper. Lady Mary Jones, whom we found engraving, seems to have been rather pleasing than beautiful. She is thin, and pale, but a pair of the finest black eyes I ever saw, animate, to a great degree, a countenance, which sickness has done its utmost to render languid, but has, perhaps, only made more delicate and amiable. Her person is exquisitely genteel, and her voice, in common speech enchantingly melodious. Mrs. Morgan, the lady who was drawing, appears to be upwards of fifty, tall, rather plump, and extremely majestic, and an air of dignity distinguishes her person, and every virtue is engraven in indelible characters on her countenance. There is a benignity in every look, which renders the decline of life, if possible, more amiable than the bloom of youth. One would almost think nature had formed her for a common parent, such universal and tender benevolence beams from every glance she casts around her." Through this description one comes to feel a degree of intimacy with each of the women much greater than that felt in the other stories. Then, in addition to the detailed description of the six ladies, a second picture is drawn for five of them through the story of their respective lives as recounted by Mrs. Maynard. In this, Mrs. Scott makes a return to the plan of characterization seen in the other novels, in which the souls of the individuals are searched and their minds measured, and in this, these ladies are found to be parallel in development to Cornelia. Miss Mancel is given a thorough education which develops a naturally kind heart, and then, as if to emphasize the qualities, her guardian is shown to be particularly vile. Mrs. Morgan, a beautiful character as a young lady, had a heartless

stepmother who stands as the element of contrast. Lady Mary Jones, who was in the tradition of Mrs. Haywood's Betsy Thoughtless, thought better of her careless life and made amends for weaknesses by proving herself worthy of Millenium Hall. Mrs. Selvyn and Mrs. Trantham, likewise, stand in sharp contrast to their surroundings.

In the story of *Millenium Hall,* Mrs. Scott had a distinct advantage in that she was giving a sort of history, or a retrospective account, much after the form of her historical biographies. She was dealing with people whose lives were more or less behind them rather than yet to be lived as in the case of the heroines in the other works. Character was stamped in the faces of the ladies as well as in their actions, and indeed, the work they were doing is in itself an index to their respective characters, except that one does not usually look for such elegance of person or keen intellectuality in the women who retire from society. For Mrs. Scott's particular genius, this was the easiest form of writing, and as one meets the characters, it is seen that they easily rise above those of her other works in clearness of portrayal and strength of personality.

As has been remarked above, Mrs. Scott's second novel, *Agreeable Ugliness,* promises the reader a change in characterization as well as in story. The dedication begins, "It is to you, my melancholy Companions, You to whom as well as to myself, churlish Nature has denied what is esteemed the most valuable, if not the only Advantage of our Sex; . . . According to the usual Style of Dedications, I ought to begin my Compliments to you, with a Panegeric to Ugliness. . . . " Ugliness, then, is the thesis of the novel, and the aim is to show that beauty of heart and mind is superior to physical beauty. To attain this goal, the characters have to be forced to act in such a way as to produce the necessary proof, and it would be no surprise to find them lacking in strength, yet the heroine, who reveals herself through her diary, has a splendid vitality. Mrs. Dorigny, in the leading role, tells her own story, thus giving a self-portrait built up chiefly through her thoughts and actions. This same manner of characterization is, in a sense, repeated in *The Test of Filial Duty* which reveals the characters of Emilia and Sophia Leonard and Charlotte Arlington through personal letters. The personal touch in the diary and again

in these letters is particularly attractive to the usual reader. In the case of this epistolary novel, Emilia's letters really reveal more of Charlotte than they do of herself, and vice-versa, but the same closeness is felt because of the personal nature of the form.

One of the most suggestive of Mrs. Scott's efforts at the creation of character, is found in a person who was probably never expected to have a special place in a reader's memory. The old Nurse, Sabrina, in *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life,* who relates the tales to her ward, even in the few glimpses one gets of her, is a delightful individual. She always starts the day with a cheery word; often says that she could tell other tales, but that they would not be to the point; succeeds in ending her narration each day at a climax in order to hold the interest until the next period of story telling; passes sly comments on life generally in reply to questions from the Princess. Her one duty unfortunately is to teach the young Princess, which duty is performed through the stories, but one has the feeling that she has lived long and that she knows many tales which would be all the better for lack of a didactic application. She seems to be actually a person apart from Mrs. Scott's creation. She is often found speaking Mrs. Scott's own personal thoughts, as, when, for instance, in introducing the story of Leonora who was allowed to make her way in the world dressed in male attire, she says, "She was almost the only Woman I have ever met with, who endeavored to conquer the Disadvantages our Sex labour under, and who proved that Custom, not Nature, inflicts that Dependence in which we live, obliged to the Industry of Man for our Support, as well as to his Courage for our Defence."

Similar to Sabrina in her ability as a teller of stories, is Mrs. Maynard. As she relates the histories of her associates to the two guests of Millenium Hall, one gets a glimpse of her personality. At no time did she prolong a story to the point of monotony; climaxes were chosen as stopping places; the desires of her guests were anticipated; and in the general conversation between parts of the stories, she is seen to be a charming woman, deeply interested in the work at Millenium Hall, but retaining a keen interest in the outside world.

Turning to Mrs. Scott's heroes, little need be said. They are portrayed in weak colors in every instance, and indeed are almost

duplicates of the ladies though even less differentiated. They faint at the sight of blood, weep at scenes of sadness, and rarely ever rise to the point of getting joy from being alive. One never seems to come to know Bernardo, Mr. de Rhone, young St. Furcy, or Mr. Leonard. They play parts opposite the young ladies, but give place to the fair ones who are led into the chief adventures alone. Mr. Ellison, alone, of the male figures, has any semblance of a real character, though even here the character is revealed through action and thought without any definite indication of his physical appearance. He is the counterpart of the ladies of Millenium Hall, and like them, lives in the country, where he is revealed directing his community in ways of attaining greater happiness from serious work and proper living. It is difficult to think of him as a man who could have protected himself in battle, or who would have expressed and maintained a personal opinion against his equals, but his sentimentality must have been particularly pleasing to Mrs. Scott.

The characters who represent evil forces in these works are deliniated by similar means to those employed in sketching the representatives of good. One trait, however, is noteworthy. Either Mrs. Scott shrank from the subject or she deliberately toned down her deliniation in this department. She seems to have felt that there was enough good in every individual to remove the necessity for harsh criticism of wrong deeds. Octavio is said to be an evil man and his deeds tend to prove him unworthy of trust, but in the final analysis, Mrs. Scott leaves a fairly clear picture of a misdirected, though not worthless life. Again, the personality of Mr. de Rheés is sketched by showing his selfishness and uncurbed desires. Contrasted with Cornelia, he seems a villain of the worst sort, but once the complication of the immediate plot has been removed, he is shown as a respectable social being.

Looking back at the characters, it would seem that Mrs. Scott endeavored to keep deliberately in the middle course with her people. She gained no heights, but escaped the definitely trivial. There are no saints, and yet, no devils. Some few of the characters are exceptionally good, as Mrs. Dorigny, and a few are mean enough to associate with the devil, as the "Fair Villiers," but Mrs. Scott could not forget that these two young ladies were human beings as well

as sisters. And again, despite all that has been said of the similarity of the characters, one is never likely to confuse one with another. That is, one would never confuse Mrs. Dorigny (*Agreeable Ugliness*) and Emilia Leonard (*The Test of Filial Duty*). The chief complaint against them is that the author failed to paint them in colors of sufficient strength to make them remain long in one's memory. With just a little more of the spirit of daring seen in one or two of the heroines—Leonora, for instance—and just a little less diligence in adhering to the usual types of the period, Mrs. Scott would have attained a higher ranking as an artist of human character. As it is, she remains one of the many competent rather than one of the distinguished authors in the list of novelists.

Treatment of History

As a historian, Mrs. Scott really succeeds better. It will be recalled that in volume one of the *Censura Literaria,* (p. 293), Mr. Brydges said she was "an excellent historian." Any possible doubt as to the truth of this statement is removed by a reading of the histories from her pen. Moreover, in the preface to *The History of Gustavus Ericson, King of Sweden,* there is set forth a careful argument touching upon the merits of history in its various forms. Her words show a keen sense of analysis, a thorough understanding of the limits of the work, and a love for this type of writing. The arguments of her preface tend to show that of all forms of history, biography is the most useful, because, "the biographer enters into a detail which more properly develops the human mind. He shows us, that kingdoms are often set at variance by trifles, scarcely worthy the contention of simple particulars. That the covetous encroachments of a man whom the minister either favours or fears, shall embroil two powerful nations; and that what is looked upon by the public eye as the effect of national resentment for national injuries, and spreads the most extensive destruction, sometimes originally arises from the private views of the lowest officer in the monarch's service." On the other hand, Mrs. Scott says, "General Histories are like the outlines of a picture: we from thence learn the design of the piece; the actions intended to be expressed may be represented in a masterly manner, but the passions which excite them, or the

consequent emotions, are in great measure lost by the want of high-finished touches, and minute deliniations, which make every circumstance obvious, and render the piece more agreeable, as well as more instructive." Going further, she says, "great actions appear to rise from great motives; kingdoms seem to quarrel with kingdoms, and everything is represented as the effect of the foresight of wisdom, the rage of ambitions, the arts of the acute politician, the passion of an headstrong prince, or the imbecility of a weak one." The historian who writes of a broad expanse of facts and people, has to "relate the actions of a collective body; Biographers show the disposition of individuals, and develop their motives while they recapitulate their action." Mrs. Scott was aware, however, of the dangers attendant upon such a method as hers of representing history. "The writer," she goes on to say, "generally chooses for his subject a favorite character; the studious application with which he searches after every incident relative to his hero, and the painful exactness with which he records them, increase the approbation which first directed the choice, into partiality. He begins to look upon him with personal tenderness and consequently endeavors to conceal or extenuate his faults. . . . Another fault in Biography is the partial knowledge it gives of history, distinguishing some particular periods with great lights, while intermediate ages are left in obscurity."

From the reading of Mrs. Scott's historical biographies, it can be seen that she was, in part, at least, guilty of the shortcomings cited in the arguments. That is, she was unquestionably drawn to the particular subjects by a strong personal preference, emphasized their excellent qualities, submerged possible weaknesses, presented only that historical data which had a direct bearing on the hero. But, with all this careful pruning and adjusting, none of the humanness and reality seem to have been lost. Both *The History of Gustavus Ericson* and *The Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné* are splendid works—the best in their respective fields known in England at the time, according to the suggestions in the contemporary reviews.

Of Gustavus Ericson, Mrs. Scott seems to have found only praise of the highest sort. She says, "He had those natural advantages which give an early prejudice in the possessor's favor, till experience has either disappointed the hopes they have raised, or fixed

opinion on so reasonable and firm a basis that expectation is lost in certainty. His person was majestic and graceful, his conversation engaging, and his temper amiable. His capacity qualified him to conceive the noblest enterprizes, and his courage enabled him to execute them. Averse to the dissipations and pleasures so attractive to most persons of his age, youth seemed to have no other effect on his disposition, than to give fire to his love of glory, to animate him in pursuit of fame, and to qualify him to support the fatigues and dangers of a martial life." Then, as the history progresses, the personality of the man is developed gradually. One almost wonders how even a king could have lived through all the trials which forced themselves upon this hero. He is shown, as the account moves forward, in his kingship—how he fought against the Danes, his fears lest he fail, and joys of success—how he made alliances and treaties, some wise, some unfortunate—how he directed his affairs of state, that is, the governmental posts, laws, institutions, etc. He is shown as a family man, kind to his wife, and a true father to his children. He is shown as a man among the people, dealing fairly with all, regardless of wealth and station. His was a difficult reign and only by an indomitable will, plus splendid co-operation from the people, could he have been successful. Then, at the end of the book, one meets the crowning touch, the most definite instance of the hand of Mrs. Scott. The king has been carried through his struggles and comes to a happy, or rather, successful, final day on earth. The author's praises are of the panegyric sort. "The throne was never to any man a more laborious station than to this prince; and as he could not resolve to neglect any of his duties of it while he kept the possession, neither age nor sickness induced him to abate his application to public affairs. . . . In this manner he acted till within a few hours before his death." He was blessed with "an uncommon justness of thought, with the greatest activity of mind," and "superior talents." He aided his people by instructing "their ignorance," and "left his kingdom furnished with every encouragement of industry, ample regards for knowledge, relief for the poor, and consolation for the sick and diseased, in the magazines, the schools, and the hospitals which he established."

Mrs. Scott and Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné were fellow

spirits. The latter would have given his life willingly in the cause of his faith; the former gave her days as well as such fortune as she possessed to her work at Bath Easton. It is no wonder then, that the story of this man's life was written with a loving hand. D'Aubigné had very few days of ease and comfort. As a Huguenot he was not popular with the majority of the people at the court, but among the common people, his personality made friends on every side. As one follows his life, he seems to have had a charmed existence. He rushed into battles, accomplished all manner of daring feats, was often wounded, but was permitted to die a peaceful death in his own home, which doubtless pleased Mrs. Scott. Little is said, directly, of the personal appearance of D'Aubigné, but from the deeds, the friendships, the general account of his life, one realizes that he must have been a man of commanding presence. He was a leader of men as a result of instinct and education, and above all things else of love for truth and duty. Those about him seem to have turned to him without question and at no time did he fail to measure up to his trust.

Mrs. Scott's remaining historical work, *The History of Mecklenburgh,* has none of the usual qualities of the author, such as are found in the other works. She wrote it not to please herself apparently, but to gratify a general public curiosity in which she shared. Every one was asking for information regarding the land of the new queen. The author says in the preface, "I confess, I was myself no less curious on this subject than the rest of my countrymen; and since I could receive no satisfaction in this respect from conversation, nor discover in such opposite accounts, which were most worthy of credit, I applied to instructors, who, being free from prejudice, might afford me a general notion, altho' perhaps, not sufficiently circumstantial in minute details." It is, then, a general work of history, which, as was noted in the preface to *The History of Gustavus Ericson,* was not a favorite historical method with its author. This sort of work did not allow a proper opportunity for the addition of those didactic touches, analyses of the heart, or, as for that, any sense of characterization.

In the biographical histories, Mrs. Scott was dealing with Gustavus Ericson (Vasa) and Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné as actual

examples of men such as were supposed to be the heroes of her novels; they had really lived, they had taken part in the most desperate struggles of the day, they had always maintained those standards of virtue and goodness which were so dear to the author. The result is that she did her best work here. The facts were prepared by life itself, which left it her duty to assemble, combine, extract, and present a clearly defined character in connection with the history of his time. Given a vitalizing force, as in these two works, Mrs. Scott was a literary artist and a scholar combined. That is, her scheme of writing—her method—was meritorious, but it demanded a contact with nature, or life itself, in order to rise above the level of the mass of merely good authors.

Mrs. Scott, the scholar, is seen in these historical works through her careful use of source materials. In the preface to *The History of Gustavus Ericson,* the following passage shows the method of approach. "The Abbé Vertot is so approved an author, that I do not know whether I shall easily be forgiven the liberty I have been obliged to take of relating some facts entirely contrary to his representation of them. There is so much elegance and spirit in his history, that I could not have pleased myself so well, as by a faithful translation of what he relates of Gustavus; but some of his facts are so contradictory to those recorded by the best authors, and others so misplaced in time or order, that I could not avoid differing sometimes entirely, at others in part, for him."[17] Instead of depending on Vertot, Mrs. Scott adds, "The authors on whose authority I have chiefly relied, are Puffendorf, Loccenius, Pontanus, Meursius, Cramero's *Compendium of the History of Sweden,* and Des Roche's *History of Denmark.*"[18]

The source materials for *The Life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné,* again show Mrs. Scott to be an able historian. The

[17] See: Vertot, René Aubert, *Histoire des Revolutions de Suede.* The popularity of this work is seen in the fact that a sixth edition of an English translation was published in 1729. Mrs. Scott evidently used a copy of the original French. That the Gustavus Ericson (Vasa) theme was popular is shown by a drama written by Henry Brooke, "Gustavus Vasa, the deliverer of his Country," 1739.

[18] Puffendorf, S., *Introductio ad Historium Sueciae,* and *Compendium Regni Sueciae.*
Pontanus, *Rerum Danicarum.*
Meursius, Johannis, *Historium Daniae.*

two chief sources consulted were, *Histoire Secrete du sieur D'Aubigné,* and *Histoire Universelle* compiled by D'Aubigné himself. In addition to these, the footnotes in the volume reveal the use of various memoirs of the more important people of the period of D'Aubigné's life,[19] a number of more or less detailed histories of France and Switzerland,[20] and at least one manuscript account of D'Aubigné—"Recueil des statutes et reglemens des Marchands libraries et imprimeurs de la ville de Paris, par M. L. Bouchel, avocat en parliament."

Conclusion

Looking back on the life and works of Mrs. Scott, we see a lady never agressive in spirit, but capable of doing good work in various fields, especially when assisted by a friend or companion on whom she could depend for encouragement and inspiration. Lady Barbara Montagu was such a companion to Mrs. Scott through the best years of her literary and social service work, and it is in the combination of these two phases of work that the most commendable results are found. That is, Mrs. Scott put into her books many of her own personal experiences, though she usually added a touch of idealization in order to heighten the didactic message.

It is interesting to measure Mrs. Scott's works by such a standard as that suggested by that prince of later novelists, Thackeray, who declares: "Out of the fictitious book I get the expression of the life, of the times, of the manners, of the merriment, of the dress, the pleasures, the laughter, the ridicules of society—the old times live again, and I travel in the old country of England."[21] If it is for these qualities that a writer is to be remembered or allowed to drop

[19] Memoirs de la reine de Navarre.
Memoirs de la reine Marguerite.
Memoirs de duc de Rohan.
Memoirs de duc de Bouillon.
Journal du regne de Henry III.
Account of Henry IV's Death, by Pere Matthiew.
[20] Villeroy, L'Esprit d'Etat.
Sully, Oeconomies Royales.
Henault, Abrégé de l'Histoire de France.
Histoire des derniers troubles de France
Spond, History of Geneva.
[21] *English Humorists,* p. 113.

into oblivion, Mrs. Scott has probably received justice at the hands of time, so far as her novels go. The principal phase of life which one sees in her fiction is that of charity practiced by a heroine who has gone through a series of stock experiences before gaining a position of security from the world which will allow her to do the things which appeal most to her heart. The other hoped for varieties of information—manners, merriment, dress, pleasures, laughter, ridicules of society—are either meagerly displayed or omitted from her pages. One word, however, can and should be said in high praise of the lady. In her letters, one finds a bulk of the materials which Thackeray looked for in fiction. Had the materials which were not only at hand but which she utilized in her correspondence, been used in her novels, Fannie Burney would not have been counted by Macaulay as the first of the female novelists in England. Even as the case stands, there are reasons for disagreement with Macaulay who did not appreciate the fact that Mrs. Scott was the author of nine books, that she can properly be looked upon, in point of time, as the second of the women novelists (Sarah Fielding alone of the authors of respectability coming earlier), and that her works are typical in many respects of their century. She seems to have been caught fast in the plot formula which demanded that the story be written in order to promote virtue and religion; that threatened honor was a necessary part of the plot, but that resistance had to be successful and properly rewarded by a faithful love in the end; that immorality could never be allowed to go unpunished; and that there had to be close scrutiny of motives and a searching of conscience. Religion was more real than it has come to be in the twentieth century. The heroine had to measure up to Clara H. Whitmore's picture of the period. "In the days of Good Queen Bess, heroines were good and happy. In the merry reign of Charles they were bad but happy. Pamela set a fashion from which heroines seldom dared to deviate for over a hundred years. They were good—but, oh, so wretched!"[22] In each of Mrs. Scott's works there is a hard, plain idea of duty, from which her characters were not allowed to turn if they would earn the respect of their fellows and the rewards of heaven. She was the sort of writer against whom Tom Cropdale makes objection in

[22] *Woman's Work in English Fiction.*

Humphrey Clinker (1771). Tom wrote novels for five pounds per volume, but found competition in the women "who publish merely for the propagation of virtue, with so much ease and spirit, and delicacy, and knowledge of the human heart, and all of the serene tranquility of high life, that the reader is not only enchanted by their genius, but reformed by their morality."

After all measures have been taken and the results placed to one side, it must be remembered that Mrs. Scott wrote, first for an escape from every day life, and second as a teacher. In the first instance, it is interesting to note the more or less definite scheme which she followed. She usually worked on two books at the same time. Just as writing counteracted the strain of daily life, so one book was probably used as a relief from the other. The first volume came out singly in 1750. Then in 1754 there appeared two efforts, one a novel, the other a collection of moral tales. A lapse of seven years followed before the first historical work appeared in 1761. It seems likely that Mrs. Scott was working on this history and the story of "Millenium Hall" during the same period. In an apparent rush to finish the book on Mecklenburgh, the Millenium Hall work was held for a time, but taken up again as soon as the history of the land of the Queen was complete. 1766 saw a single work, but again in 1772 there appeared two volumes, and it is to be noted that one was history and the other fiction. This method of keeping two works, of an entirely different nature, in hand at one time must have seemed worth while. The book of 1750 was doubtless produced out of the fullness of the young author's experience and her instinctive desire to write. The next two were written during the days of getting away from the experience with Mr. Scott. The history of 1761 and *Millenium Hall* (1762) came in the midst of the busy days at Bath Easton, and the last two works were probably the fruit of efforts to get away from the things which, in general, might remind her of the life as it had been lived with Lady Bab.

It is practically impossible to think of Mrs. Scott as one who expected to gain anything material from her writing. It was rather a means of escape and relief. Admirably qualified for the work as she was by education and inclination, this form of relief must have stood her in good stead, helping to make a none too happy existence

a bit more cheerful, and, of course, there was always present in her mind the bare possibility of helping someone through the examples in her books. She made no effort to break away from the spirit of the eighteenth century, nor is there any reason to believe that she would have cared to do so. It is as a gentlewoman, alert to the intellectual and social tendencies of the day, yet guided by a native dignity and strict religious zeal which gave a moral tone to all her writings and made her assiduously avoid all notoriety, that Mrs. Scott must be looked upon as a representative author. She is, indeed, a typical product of the century's sentimental and didactic ideals.

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